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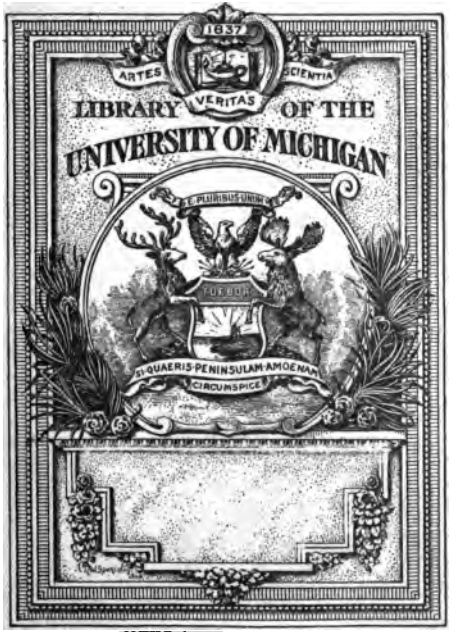
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A CALENDAR OF VERSE

A CALENDAR OF VERSE

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

GEORGE SAINTSBURY

Second Edition

LONDON

PERCIVAL AND CO

1893

INTRODUCTION

I have been asked to write a few words of introduction to this poetical ephemeris; and though the quality of its matter needs no bush, the form of its presentation may give scope for the office of the interpreter. It is not uncommon to find critics objecting to selections in toto *and as such. Nor is it, I hope, inconsistent, paradoxical, or profligate in one who has made not a few selections himself, and is actually engaged in recommending another, to confess a certain sympathy with these objections when they are genuine and not affected. To some lovers of literature in all moods, to all perhaps in some, selections present an opportunity of irritation. The things that one wants are not given; the things that one does not want are given; the selections begin not as we would have them begun; they cease at points other than those where we would have them finished.*

This may be so. But there are compensating advantages

in selections, and the book to which I am performing the office of an all unworthy gentleman-usher stands, I think, apart from ordinary selections. The selector's aim, as I understand it, is by no means—even to the extent to which ordinary selections can afford a substitute for the reading of the originals—to proffer such a substitute here. The authors are too numerous, and too great in themselves for the most part, the selections are individually too short, for even a suspicion of such a pretension to occur to any reasonable mind. In some cases, no doubt, this book, like all books of the kind, may serve as an introduction to the writers on whom it draws, may induce a previously ignorant reader to explore for himself the stores whereof tastes and samples are here presented to him; and in a certain sense this possibility is of itself a justification for the existence of this and of any book of the kind. But I should suppose, without shifting the responsibility of the supposition to any other shoulders than my own, that the main purpose of the volume is something different—that it is a purpose rather of reminding and refreshing than of introduction, much less of substitution. The books of devotion which have always, and those of moral but secular reflection which have sometimes, been popular, have never

pretended to supersede the sacred books of the cult, the elaborate expositions and texts of the philosophy. They rather offer themselves as flappers in the Laputan sense, as prompters and givers of the cue, as stimulants to fasten memory afresh on her old quarry, as keywords to unlock the chambers of association. The habit of quotation, both classical and other, has been much disused and not a little decried of late. I fear some of the decrying has been, consciously or unconsciously, prompted by a sense of not being in case to put an end to the disuse. But in the days when quotation was most used, and in the cases of those persons who are still fond of it, the attraction was and is, I think, not the parade of learning, still less a lazy or impotent desire to let others speak instead of speaking for one's-self. It was because the quotation awoke, or was intended to awake, in the minds of both author and reader the memory of context and continuation. An apt quotation is like the 'Do you remember' of old lovers and old friends, and, if it sometimes seems impertinent to those to whom the associations which it arouses do not appeal, it has all the greater attraction for the initiated.

Now the selections given day by day as a portion, and connecting certain poets with certain months, in this

little book seem to me much more in the nature of such quotations than in that of substantive 'beauties.' They come trailing clouds of glory; they are an occasion of remembrance of the great plays or poems from which they are extracted; they are an incitement to poetical meditation or retreat. It is immaterial whether the presentation of them tempts to the actual taking down from the shelves of the volumes whence they come, or whether the process of reviving acquaintance is mental and imaginative only. It is enough that the word is spoken, the circuit connected.

It remains to say a few words of the authors chosen, excepting only Shakespeare, of whom it is needful to say nothing. The choice has been, I am informed, conditioned by inability to obtain permission for the use of copyright matter, which will account for the non-appearance of some names that might be expected. But in every case the poets who appear have good reason for appearing, and the allotment of a full month to each has given scope for something like a fair representation of each. I have frequently been told by persons of good parts that they 'cannot' read Spenser. An otherwise polite and obliging American critic once felt himself constrained to utter a kind of 'Fie! fie!' over a sentence of mine to the effect that the Faerie Queene *was the*

only long poem I have ever wished longer. It seems to be useless to prescribe him for school and college use—indeed, such prescription has not generally been observed to dispose the users to enjoyment afterwards. Either the old fear of the allegory biting them, or the elaborate antiquity of the language, or something else, seems to exercise a deterrent effect, which would be more intelligible if we accepted the dictum of the Sadducees to the effect that real lovers of poetry are very few. To me it seems that, to any one who is such a lover, Spenser is the natural, the quotidian, the unsatiating food. I would fain hope, with a hope not very robust, indeed, that such flash-lights as are here turned on specimens of his various beauties may not only exercise upon Spenserians the charm of recall, which has been described as the main office of the book, but may actually perform the other function which has been referred to as possible, and induce exploration of that enchanted forest, the like of which, for white witchery, no other literature contains; of that country of poetical lotus-eating, from which the very inspiration of the Lotus-Eaters *itself was drawn, far more than from Homer.*

The fitness of Coleridge for the purpose is of a different kind. The charm of Spenser is, like all true charms, either

impotent and non-existent, or else omnipotent and omnipresent. On those who are protected from it—I will not say what, in my opinion, is the character of the protecting agency,—it never works at all. With those who are open to it, it never fails. The poet of the Faerie Queene *never sleeps except to those who regard him as always asleep. With Coleridge it is very different. No doubt it is right and proper that there should be complete editions of his poetical works; but to read those poetical works as a whole, and 'straight on,' must always be a task both ascetic and athletic. Except* The Ancient Mariner *and a very few others, there is no piece of Coleridge's which is good as a whole. And yet, when he is good, his goodness is that of the very highest poetry, and, what is more, of a poetry at once prophetic in kind of the whole century of verse which has succeeded his, and yet transcending the kind of any particular time, so as to rank and blend with the greatest poetry of all ages. Take, for instance, the three successive portions here given for March* 14 *and the two following days. I would the first were not disfigured by the unutterable Cockneyism of 'fountain' and 'mounting,' but that is quite Coleridgean in its contempt of the file. They are all different: they are all ancient: they are all modern: they are all everything.*

They suggest by turns poets of the most distinct idiosyncrasy in both senses of distinction, Rossetti, Dekker, Chaucer, Blake, Donne, Sappho, a crowd of others. It is only after a little thinking that you see this to be no result of imitation, either by Coleridge or of Coleridge, but simply that the myriad-sided spirit of poetry shows in him by turns, as in hardly any other poet, facet after facet, each far removed from the other, and elsewhere found in quite different combinations. But the inspiration is almost always temporary and fragmentary, scarcely ever combined and systematic; so that nothing can better show, or more fully reconstruct in the memory, the poetical genius of this unique poet than a series of fragments. In not a few cases the context of these fragments hardly lets itself be read as a whole, and is not as a whole read by any but robust students and critics. Those who know The Ancient Mariner, Love, Kubla Khan, *and the other things that everybody knows, have an enviable knowledge, but they do not know Coleridge.*

In passing from Coleridge to Herrick the change is perhaps greater and more remarkable than in any other pair of poets in any language, irrespective entirely of date and style; or, rather, the change of date impresses itself almost to the neglect of the change of style. Coleridge was a loftier poet

than Herrick, but he was also a far less complete one. It is somewhat useless to compare the lives, and, as far as we know them, the personal idiosyncrasies of the two men. The oppositions of meliora probo deteriora sequor *are scarcely greater in the one than the other. I do not know why opium should be allowed a privilege which is denied to sack and Julia. But Herrick was fortunate in that he came at the end of a period in more senses than one. He was not troubled with 'problems' of any kind; and if any presented themselves to men of his time, he had strength of temperament and strength of character to neglect them. He did not travel beyond the obvious in things seen or in things unseen. His piety was perfectly sincere; his sensuality was perfectly sincere likewise. And in putting both these motives into poetical form he had the enormous advantage of representing, fully ripened, the style and language of the great period which began with the Elizabethans proper. Coleridge, burdened with all manner of preoccupations, and charged with the further burden of inventing or re-inventing a style, is unequal always—is sometimes quite unequal to himself. Herrick is either frankly bad in the minority of his poems, those which are not presented at all here, or frankly and evenly good. Where the subject does not exclude him at once, there is*

rarely any mistake about him. False notes, discords, discrepancies, shortcomings of phrase or rhythm, are exceedingly rare in him. His style, representing a great natural faculty, improved and perfected by an unparalleled discipline from his predecessors, is absolutely under his command, and he never tries any subject which is not in different ways under his command likewise. There is in its way a near approach to perfection, it is sometimes an actual arrival thereat. There are many greater poets than Herrick, but when, in the old phrase, he has his eye on the object, and when that object is in itself not an unpoetical one, it is almost impossible for Herrick to go wrong.

With Shelley we relapse or rise, for both words are permissible from different points of view, from the seventeenth into the nineteenth century. We have in him, again, a greater poet than Herrick; we have, I think, a greater poet than Coleridge; and we have a poet to whom it was impossible, as it was sometimes possible to Coleridge, to be unpoetical. But in May as in March we are out of the region of perfect adjustment of means to ends, of style to subject. I think myself, and have always thought, that A Lament, *which is given here, is the greatest thing in English poetry out of Shakespeare; the greatest thing in the*

entire poetry of the world out of Shakespeare, Dante, and Æschylus. Nowhere else, save in some passages of these three poets, has the passionate experience of life (which is a different thing from the 'criticism' of it), been put into such perfectly faultless and flawless verse. But the fault of Shelley was the fault of voluminousness and volubility, which seems to have come with this century. He died a young, almost a very young, man: he has left a great volume of verse, and hardly any of it can, like much of Coleridge's, be pronounced to be distinctly inferior. But it constantly needs compression, criticism, boiling down. Yet this very fault, if fault it be, and the companion merit of the omnipresence of the spirit of poetry, make selections from Shelley peculiarly attractive for that purpose of 'key words,' which has been hinted at above. Such selections can hardly fail to be exquisite in themselves; still less can they fail to remind the reader of the other treasures, vast and enormous, disorderly but exquisite, which await him in the original.

As we come from Shelley to Mr. William Morris we come from a poet whose place is long since recognised, to one who, in the general estimate at least, has yet to secure it. I have myself no doubt what that place will be. As one passes in

mental review the first books of our poets, there are few, indeed, that strike the mind with such a sense of initiation, of a new leaf turned, of a new country opening from a height, as that given by the Defence of Guinevere. *To have read that book or any such book, at or within a few years of its appearance, exposes the reader, of course, to a disturbing or distracting influence which is very well known in criticism. But it is the business of the critic to allow for that, and to bring himself as near as possible to the condition of those who have read it later, or of those who, speaking paradoxically, might, if it had been possible, have read it earlier. And, after making this allowance, I should myself select Mr. William Morris as the typical poet of the latter part of the century in England. He has nowhere risen quite so high as Mr. Swinburne has; he has nowhere travelled quite so far out of the common as did Rossetti; he has injured his work by extreme voluminousness, and, latterly, by fantastic excursions into regions where, saving his reverence, he talks mostly nonsense. But he was the first to publish, if not to write, of all his school, and no member of it has the combined notes of that school quite so well as he.* Gold Wings, Rapunzel, The Blue Closet, *could not have been written earlier; and I doubt whether any poem in any literature gives the sense of*

contrast between past and present with such a mixture of vividness and variety as does the Earthly Paradise. *Mr. Morris chose Chaucer as his master, but it is Spenser, not Chaucer, of whom he really holds; and if any one has ever revived the dreamy magic of the* Faerie Queene, *it is the singer who, at half a full life-time of distance, has sung of Guinevere and of Goldilocks.*

The contrast or comparison between Mr. Morris and Keats is again interesting. Mr. Morris is most emphatically of his time. His poetry is at its best a nepenthe which helps us to forget the nineteenth century; but it is a nepenthe which could hardly have been brewed except at the season when it was required for use. Keats is of no time at all. That Shakespearian quality of his, the mere mention of which has the power to cause bristlings and protests on the part of some critics, consists precisely in this, though there is a not important difference in the fact that Shakespeare strikes us as being for all time because he is of all; Keats as being for all time because he is not definitely of any one in particular. It is possible, it is indeed probable, that his very early death did him a service in this way as in others. But the fact remains. His poetical differentia *is individual enough; and even these fragments can be read by no one without the*

Keatsian atmosphere, the atmosphere of abstract poetry, hardly conditioned by time or space, rising around the reader. But it is out of all direct relation with his friends, his education, his reading, his age. That Hellenism, that Elizabethanism of his, which have been so much vaunted, are arrived at in virtue of this very disengagedness; he understood the Greeks because they were poets, and he was a poet, though they were much else and he was nothing.

August ought to bring warm weather, and it brings us, in the poet here selected for the month, a subject apt to cause heat. It should be by this time easy to speak of Byron critically, but I do not know that it is; and I am also inclined to think that he is an unusually difficult poet to exhibit in small extracts. Very delightful things—most of them well known, some not so—will indeed be found here. But Byron, as it seems to me, needs more than most poets to be taken in large doses. Often he is legible chiefly for the story; oftener for that unfailing revelation of his own peculiar temperament which charmed most men of his own generation, and has continued to charm some, though not so many, of the generations succeeding. He is not, as a rule, good at 'jewels five words long,' and his unfortunate tendency to slovenly faults of language, metre, and phrase is apt to show itself. Yet the

present selection will be found, I think, to show him remarkably well. Some of his lyrics, some of those really magnificent and really original pieces of description which helped so powerfully to make his fame, some of the specially Byronic touches in other pieces, should suffice to perform the office of reminding and evocation. It is, I believe, certain that Byron is not much read now; I should be curious to know whether this sample will send any one to him, and, if so, whether the person sent will find those qualities of 'sincerity and strength,' which have been assigned to him by some critics, and of which others feel inclined to say that the sincerity is the sincerity of the stage, and the strength the strength of real or artificial delirium.

The experiment made here under the invocation of 'soft-eyed September' may seem to some a little bold. Most of the poets here drawn upon, though some of them are of a higher order than others in different schemes, belong, on any comprehensive scheme, beyond all question to the di majorum gentium *of English poetry. Of Thomas Campion, till the other day, only a few special students had heard; and widely as the revelation of him has been greeted, I doubt whether even pretty enthusiastic admirers who have critical paste in their composition, would call him a poet of the first order.*

Yet it will be found, I think, that he makes more than a fair show here, that he can hold up his head with almost any of his fellows save the very greatest. And I would go further and say that the reason of this is not far to seek. Campion is possessed almost everywhere of, or by, that extraordinary Elizabethan quality which has been so much, but never too much, talked of. The air and fire that pervade that wonderful division of our verse are his, if not everywhere, yet in a majority of his pieces. It may not be very easy to analyse the secret of this charm. But that is very frequently indeed the case with the best poetry. And Campion has likewise the faculty of making quite commonplace thought and emotion sublime and rare. We may find no very deep, no very pregnant, no very lofty ideas, no very exquisite or uncommon fancy, wedded to the lark-like music of 'When to her lute Corinna sings,' to the sad minor of 'Kind are her answers,' to the solemn hymnody of 'Awake, awake, thou heavy sprite,' and the rest. But all the thought is just and true, all the fancy is dainty and fresh. And certainly, on our keynote principle, no writer could be more fitted to present or suggest that vast body of minor Elizabethan song which sometimes tempts those who listen to it to prefer it even to the major singers of other times.

Many of Scott's best things are, like the best things of his contemporaries, not to be given in sample or fragment. You cannot break off a piece from 'Young Lochinvar' or from 'Bonnie Dundee' without ruining them, and the narrative poems are even more unmanageable. Yet the fragments, the chief of them being the ineffable 'Proud Maisie,' which Scott scattered quite carelessly about his works, and which some poets would have issued carefully, each with a page to itself, and some with blank pages to introduce them, are peculiarly suited to such a book as this. There have been signs of late that the kind of allowance which for a time was fashionable in speaking of Scott's poetical work—the patronising kindness with which it used to be urged that we really must excuse his indifferent verse for the sake of his delightful prose—is giving place to a juster estimate. The fact, of course, is, that if Scott had not been the greatest of novelists, a novelist who to unapproached synthetic power united analytical faculty enough to make the capital of twenty Psychologues, *he would still be regarded by all sound poetical critics as second in English narrative poetry only to Chaucer, and as a master of more than one kind of lyric who is second to none.*

Wordsworth did not think much of Scott as a poet; what

were Scott's complete thoughts of Wordsworth we do not know, for Sir Walter, though an excellent critic, too liberal only in praise, was wont in the case of his friends to keep the finger of silence pressed on the lip of caution when he had anything else than praise to give. And it is now, by all but Wordsworthians sans *criticism and* sans *compromise, admitted that there is a good deal otherwise than in praise to say of Wordsworth. But it is also admitted by all that probably no poet ever existed who is so easily and so well represented by excerpts and brief excerpts as he. Even in his sublimest poems, even in the great Ode itself, the dull, ruthless drone of the preacher will deafen us to the singer's music; and, in all but his best, this heart-breaking war of sounds is all but universal. How excellent then, by a wise activeness in skipping, to abstract ourselves from the ugly sound and listen only to the beautiful! How much more excellent still to have the exertion of skipping performed for us! The poet's proficiency in the sonnet, too, enables entire pieces to be given; and the peculiar character of the Wordsworthian muse lends itself, as few others do, to the extraction of what may be called poetical aphorisms, texts for musing on, such as this book should specially provide.*

And then as we began with Shakespeare so we end with

Milton, of whom it were hard, once more, to say anything new in any case, and hardest to say it here. But perhaps in the case of no poet except Shakespeare again does a text-book of this sort supply the prompter's office of which we have spoken so well as in the case of Milton. His best things are still, it is to be hoped, universally known, if not by direct reading, by the fact of constant quotation, and yet so perfect is their art that the best things of no poet seem less hackneyed. The gems of Comus, *of the* Allegro *and its fellow, of* Lycidas, *and of the more powerful passages in the longer poems, have such an imperishable quality of style that nothing can stale them. No diamond is more certain than they to flash, with the due conditions of light, exactly in the same way when seen for the thousandth as when seen for the first time.*

Mercury, albeit a herald by office, speaks perhaps even more harshly before than after Apollo, and I had, doubtless, better bring these few words to an end. Our fathers used to affect what they called table books—books in which they were wont to inscribe sentences and passages from their favourite authors. These were sentences and passages which they knew perfectly well and had no precise necessity of thus fixing in their memories, but which gave them subjects for thought and pleasant meetings once more with old friends.

Introduction

If this book, serving as a ready-made table book for these idler days, should give to its readers as much pleasure as, in turning over the leaves of it, it has given me, I think the compiler's time and labour will not have been lost. And yet there is not, I think, a single passage in it which is not, and has not long been, familiar to me. For in such cases as this, contempt is the last thing that familiarity breeds; and the fervour of new acquaintance only mellows and does not lessen as it passes into the strength of old friendship.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

*** *The compiler wishes to acknowledge with hearty thanks Mr. Morris's kindness in allowing selections to be made from his works.*

SHAKESPEARE

THE man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted.

From *The Merchant of Venice.*

If thou remember'st not the slightest folly
That ever love did make thee run into,
Thou hast not loved :
Or if thou hast not sat, as I do now,
Wearying thy hearer in thy mistress praise,
Thou hast not loved :
Or if thou hast not broke from company
Abruptly, as my passion now makes me,
Thou hast not loved.

From *As You Like It.*

SONG

WHO is Silvia? what is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heavens such grace did lend her,
That she might admirèd be.

Is she kind, as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness:
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness;
And, being help'd, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing,
Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

From *Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

WHEN icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who;
Tu-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who;
Tu-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

From *Love's Labour' Lost*

OUR revels now are ended: these our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind: We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

From *The Tempest.*

SONNET LXXIII

THAT time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed, whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

SONNET CXVI

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:—
O no! It is an ever-fixèd mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out ev'n to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, and no man ever loved.

HEAVEN and yourself
Had part in this fair maid; now Heaven hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid:
Your part in her you could not keep from death;
But Heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
The most you sought was—her promotion;
For 'twas your heaven, she should be advanc'd,
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanc'd,
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
O, in this love, you love your child so ill,
That you run mad, seeing that she is well.

From *Romeo and Juliet.*

SONG

TAKE, oh take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again,
Seals of love, but sealed in vain,
Sealed in vain.

From *Measure for Measure.*

FRIENDSHIP is constant in all other things,
Save in the office and affairs of love:
Therefore, all hearts in love use their own tongues;
Let every eye negotiate for itself,
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch,
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.
This is an accident of hourly proof.

From *Much Ado about Nothing*.

FOR it so falls out,
That what we have we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,
Why, then we rack the value; then we find
The virtue, that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours.

From *Much Ado about Nothing.*

CEASE to lament for that thou canst not help,
And study help for that which thou lament'st.
Time is the nurse and breeder of all good.
Here if thou stay, thou canst not see thy love;
Besides, thy staying will abridge thy life.
Hope is a lover's staff; walk hence with that,
And manage it against despairing thoughts.

From *Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

O HEAVEN! that one might read the book of fate,
And see the revolution of the times
Make mountains level, and the continent,
Weary of solid firmness, melt itself
Into the sea! and, other times, to see
The beachy girdle of the ocean
Too wide for Neptune's hips: how chances mock,
And changes fill the cup of alteration
With divers liquors! O, if this were seen,
The happiest youth, viewing his progress through,
What perils past, what crosses to ensue,
Would shut the book, and sit him down and die.

From the Second Part of *King Henry IV.*

Angelo.

Your brother is a forfeit of the law,
And you but waste your words.

Isabella.

Alas! alas!
Why all the souls that were, were forfeit once;
And He that might the vantage best have took
Found out the remedy: How would you be,
If He, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are? O, think on that,
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man new-made.

From *Measure for Measure.*

OVER hill, over dale,
  Thorough bush, thorough briar,
Over park, over pale,
  Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be:
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

From *Midsummer-Night's Dream.*

ARE not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?
Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
The season's difference; as, the icy fang,
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind;
Which when it bites and blows upon my body,
Even till I shrink with cold, I smile, and say,—
This is no flattery: these are counsellors
That feelingly persuade me what I am.
Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from publick haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

From *As You Like It.*

REASON thus with life,—
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but fools would keep; a breath thou art,
(Servile to all the skiey influences),
That dost this habitation, where thou keep'st,
Hourly afflict. Merely, thou art death's fool,
For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun,
And yet runn'st toward him still: Thou art not noble;
For all the accommodations that thou bear'st
Are nurs'd by baseness; Thou art by no means valiant;
For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork
Of a poor worm: Thy best of rest is sleep,
And that thou oft provok'st; yet grossly fear'st
Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thyself;
For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains
That issue out of dust: Happy thou art not;
For what thou hast not, still thou striv'st to get,
And what thou hast, forgett'st.

From *Measure for Measure.*

PERSEVERANCE, dear my lord,
Keeps honour bright: To have done, is to hang
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery. Take the instant way;
For honour travels in a strait so narrow,
Where one but goes abreast: keep then the path;
For emulation hath a thousand sons,
That one by one pursue: If you give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,
Like to an enter'd tide, they all rush by,
And leave you hindermost;—

. . . . . .

For time is like a fashionable host,
That slightly shakes his parting guest by the hand
And with his arms outstretch'd, as he would fly,
Grasps-in the comer: Welcome ever smiles,
And Farewell goes out sighing.

From *Troilus and Cressida.*

SONNET XVIII

SHALL I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
  So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
  So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

I WOULD, I had some flowers o' the spring that might
Become your time of day; . . .
. . . . . O Proserpina,
For the flowers now, that, frightedst, thou lett'st fall
From Dis's waggon! daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets dim
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength; . .
. . . . . bold oxlips and
The crown imperial; lilies of all kinds,
The flower de luce being one!

From *Winter's Tale.*

ORPHEUS with his lute made trees,
And the mountain-tops that freeze,
Bow themselves, when he did sing :
To his music, plants and flowers
Ever sprung : as sun and showers
There had made a lasting spring.

Everything that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea,
Hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art :
Killing care, and grief of heart,
Fall asleep, or hearing, die.

From *King Henry VIII.*

If music be the food of love, play on,
Give me excess of it; that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.—
That strain again;—it had a dying fall:
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing, and giving odour.—Enough; no more;
'Tis not so sweet now, as it was before.
O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou!
That, notwithstanding thy capacity
Receiveth as the sea; nought enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soever,
But falls into abatement and low price,
Even in a minute! so full of shapes is fancy,
That it alone is high-fantastical.

From *Twelfth Night.*

SONG

HARK ! hark ! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chalic'd flowers that lies ;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes ;
With everything that pretty bin :
My lady sweet, arise ;
Arise, arise.

From *Cymbeline.*

Juliet.

Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Romeo.

It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops;
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

From *Romeo and Juliet.*

ON a day—alack the day!
Love, whose month is ever May,
Spied a blossom, passing fair,
Playing in the wanton air:
Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen, 'gan passage find:
That the lover, sick to death,
Wish'd himself the heaven's breath.
Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow;
Air, would I might triumph so!
But, alack, my hand is sworn,
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn:
Vow, alack! for youth unmeet;
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet!
Do not call it sin in me,
That I am forsworn for thee;
Thou for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were;
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love.

From *Love's Labour's Lost.*

COME away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid:
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white stuck all with yew,
O, prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strown;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown:
A thousand, thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O, where
Sad true lover never find my grave
To weep there.

From *Twelfth Night.*

TO-MORROW, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

From *Macbeth.*

THERE is some soul of goodness in things evil,
Would men observingly distil it out;
For our bad neighbour makes us early stirrers,
Which is both healthful, and good husbandry:
Besides, they are our outward consciences,
And preachers to us all; admonishing,
That we should dress us fairly for our end.
Thus may we gather honey from the weed,
And make a moral of the devil himself.

From *King Henry V.*

BLOW, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most love is mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most love is mere folly:
Then heigh-ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

From *As You Like It.*

SPENSER

AND lastly came cold February, sitting
In an old wagon, for he could not ride,
Drawne of two Fishes for the season fitting,
Which through the flood before did softly slyde
And swim away; yet had he by his side
His plough and harnesse fit to till the ground,
And tooles to prune the trees, before the pride
Of hasting Prime did make them burgein round.
So past the Twelve Months forth, and their dew places found.

From *The Faerie Queene.*

Willye.

Thomalin, why sytten wee soe,
As weren overwent with woe,
Upon so fayre a morow?
The ioyous time now nigheth fast,
That shall alegge this bitter blast,
And slake the winter sorow.

Thomalin.

Sicker, Willye, thou warnest well;
For winters wrath beginnes to quell,
And pleasaunt spring appeareth:
The grasse nowe ginnes to be refresht,
The swallowe peepes out of her nest,
And clowdie welkin cleareth.

From *The Shepheards Calender.*

Of all the race of silver-winged Flies
Which doo possesse the empire of the aire,
Betwixt the centred earth and azure skies,
Was none more favourable, nor more faire,
Whilst heaven did favour his felicities,
Then Clarion, the eldest sonne and heire
Of Muscaroll, and in his fathers sight
Of all alive did seeme the fairest wight.

. . . . . .

The woods, the rivers, and the medowes green,
With his aire-cutting wings he measured wide,
Ne did he leave the mountaines bare unseene,
Nor the ranke grassie fennes delights untride.
But none of these, how ever sweet they beene,
Mote please his fancie, nor him cause t' abide:
His choicefull sense with every change doth flit.
No common things may please a wavering wit.

From *The Fate of the Butterflie.*

TRUE he it said, whatever man it sayd,
That love with gall and hony doth abound:
But if the one be with the other wayd,
For every dram of hony, therein found,
A pound of gall doth over it redound:
That I too true by triall have approved;
For since the day that first with deadly wound
My heart was launcht, and learned to have loved,
I never ioyed howre, but still with care was moved.

And yet such grace is given them from above,
That all the cares and evill which they meet
May nought at all their setled mindes remove,
But seeme gainst common sence to them most sweet;
As bósting in their martyrdome unmeet.
So all that ever yet I have endured
I count as naught, and tread downe under feet,
Since of my Love at length I rest assured,
That to disloyalty she will not be allured.

From *The Faerie Queene.*

—Of all burdens, that a man can beare,
Most is, a fooles talke to beare and to heare.
I weene the geaunt has not such a weight,
That beares on his shoulders the heavens height.
Thou findest fault where nys to be found,
And buildest strong warke upon a weake ground:
Thou raylest on, right withouten reason,
And blamest hem much for small encheason.

From *The Shepheards Calender.*

HERE have I cause in men iust blame to find,
That in their proper praise too partiall bee,
And not indifferent to woman kind,
To whom no share in armes and chevalree
They doe impart, ne maken memoree
Of their brave gestes and prowesse martiall:
Scarse do they spare to one, or two, or three,
Rowme in their writtes; yet the same writing small
Does all their deedes deface, and dims their glories all.

But by recōrd of āntique times I finde
That wemen wont in warres to beare most sway,
And to all great exploites themselves inclin'd,
Of which they still the girlond bore away;
Till envious men, fearing their rules decay,
Gan coyne streight lawes to curb their liberty:
Yet, sith they warlike armes have laide away,
They have exceld in artes and pollicy,
That now we foolish men that prayse gin eke t' envȳ.

From *The Faerie Qucenc.*

WHAT more felicitie can fall to creature
Then to enjoy delight with libertie,
And to be lord of all the workes of Nature,
To raigne in th' aire from th' earth to highest skie,
To feed on flowres and weeds of glorious feature,
To take what ever thing doth please the eie?
Who rests not pleased with such happines,
Well worthy he to taste of wretchednes.

From *The Fate of the Butterflie.*

BUT what on earth can long abide in state?
Or who can him assure of happy day?
Sith morning faire may bring fowle evening late,
And least mishap the most blisse alter may!
For thousand perills lie in close awaite
About us daylie, to worke our decay;
That none, except a God, or God him guide,
May them avoyde, or remedie provide.

From *The Fate of the Butterflie.*

For Day discovers all dishonest wayes,
And sheweth each thing as it is in deed:
The prayses of High God he faire displayes,
And His large bountie rightly doth areed:
Dayes dearest children be the blessed seed
Which Darknesse shall subdue and heaven win:
Truth is his daughter; he her first did breed
Most sacred Virgin without spot of sinne:
Our life is day; but death with darknesse doth begin.

O, when will Day then turne to me againe,
And bring with him his long-expected light!
O Titan! hast to reare thy joyous waine;
Speed thee to spred abroad thy beamës bright,
And chace away this too long lingring Night;
Chace her away, from whence she came, to hell:
She, she it is, that hath me done despight:
There let her with the damned spirits dwell,
And yield her rowme to Day, that can it governe well.

From *The Faerie Queene.*

UNPERFITE

WHEN I bethinke me on that speeche whyleare
Of Mutability, and well it way;
Me seemes, that though she all unworthy were
Of the heav'ns rule; yet, very sooth to say,
In all things else she bears the greatest sway:
Which makes me loath this state of life so tickle,
And love of things so vaine to cast away;
Whose flowring pride, so fading and so fickle,
Short Time shall soon cut down with his consuming sickle!

Then gin I thinke on that which Nature sayd,
Of that same time when no more change shall be,
But stedfast rest of all things, firmely stayd
Upon the pillours of Eternity,
That is contrayr to Mutability:
For all that moveth doth in change delight:
But thenceforth all shall rest eternally
With Him that is the God of Sabaoth hight:
O! that great Sabaoth God, grant me that Sabbaths sight!

From *The Faerie Queene.*

THERE, in a meadow, by the rivers side,
A flocke of Nymphes I chaunced to espy,
All lovely daughters of the Flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks, all loose untyde,
As each had bene a bryde;
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs, entrayled curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously
The tender stalkes on hye.
Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
They gathered some; the violet, pallid blew,
The little dazie, that at evening closes,
The virgin lillie, and the primrose trew,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegroomes posies
Against the brydale-day, which was not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

From *A Spousall Verse.*

WHENCE is it, that the flowret of the field doth fade,
And lyeth buried long in Winters bale;
Yet, soone as Spring his mantle hath displayde,
It flowreth fresh, as it should never fayle?
But thing on earth that is of most availe,
As vertues branch and beauties bud,
Reliven not for any good.
O heavie herse!
The branch once dead, the bud eke needes must quaile;
O carefull verse!

From *The Shepheards Calender.*

HYMNE

. . . . .

So every spirit, as it is most pure,
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer bodie doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairely dight
With chearefull grace and amiable sight;
For of the soule the bodie forme doth take;
For soule is forme, and doth the bodie make.

SONNET LXXXII

Ioy of my life ! full oft for loving you
I blesse my lot, that was so lucky plac'd :
But then the more your owne mishap I rew,
That are so much by so meane love embased.
For, had the equall hevens so much you graced
In this as in the rest, ye mote invent
Some hevenly wit, whose verse could have enchased
Your glorious name in golden moniment.
But since ye deignd so goodly to relent
To me your thrall, in whom is little worth ;
That little, that I am, shall all be spent
In setting your immortal prayses forth :
Whose lofty argument, uplifting me,
Shall lift you up unto an high degree.

I SAW him die, I saw him die, as one
Of the meane people, and brought foorth on beare;
I saw him die, and no man left to mone
His dolefull fate, that late him loved deare:
Scarse anie left to close his eylids neare;
Scarse anie left upon his lips to laie
The sacred sod, or Requiem to saie.

. . . . . .

He now is dead, and all his glorie gone,
And all his greatnes vapoured to nought,
That as a glasse upon the water shone,
Which vanisht quite, so soone as it was sought:
His name is worne alreadie out of thought,
Ne anie Poet seekes him to revive;
Yet manie Poets honourd him alive.

From *The Ruines of Time.*

For deeds doe die, how ever noblie donne,
And thoughts of men do as themselves decay:
But wise wordes taught in numbers for to runne,
Recorded by the Muses, live for ay;
Ne may with storming showers be washt away,
Ne bitter-breathing windes with harmfull blast,
Nor age, nor envie, shall them ever wast.

. . . . . .

But Fame with golden wings aloft doth flie
Above the reach of ruinous decay,
And with brave plumes doth beate the azure skie,
Admir'd of base-borne men from farre away:
Then who so will with vertuous deeds assay
To mount to heaven, on Pegasus must ride,
And with sweete Poets verse be glorifide.

From *The Ruines of Time.*

WHATEVER thing is done, by Him is donne,
Ne any may His mighty will withstand;
Ne any may His soveraine power shonne,
Ne loose that He hath bound with stedfast band:
In vaine therefore doest thou now take in hand
To call to count, or weigh His workes anew,
Whose counsels depth thou canst not understand;
Sith of things subject to thy daily vew
Thou doest not know the causes nor their courses dew.

For take thy ballaunce, if thou be so wise,
And weigh the winde that under heaven doth blow;
Or weigh the light that in the east doth rise;
Or weigh the thought that from man's mind doth flow:
But if the weight of these thou canst not show,
Weigh but one word which from thy lips doth fall:
For how canst thou those greater secrets know,
That doest not know the least thing of them all?
Ill can he rule the great that cannot reach the small.

From *The Faerie Queene.*

WHAT man is he, that boasts of fleshly might
And vaine assurance of mortality,
Which, all so soone as it doth come to fight
Against spirituall foes, yields by and by,
Or from the fielde most cowardly doth fly!
Ne let the man ascribe it to his skill,
That thorough grace hath gained victory:
If any strength we have, it is to ill,
But all the good is Gods, both power and eke will.

From *The Faerie Queene.*

O NOBLE spirite, live there ever blessed,
The worlds late wonder, and the heavens new ioy;
Live ever there, and leave me here distressed
With mortall cares and cumbrous worlds anoy!
But, where thou dost that happines enioy,
Bid me, O bid me quicklie come to thee,
That happie there I maie thee alwaies see!

From *The Ruines of Time.*

HYMNE

LOVE, lift me up upon thy golden wings
From this base world unto thy heavens hight,
Where I may see those admirable things
Which there thou workest by thy soveraine might,
Farre above feeble reach of earthly sight,
That I thereof an heavenly Hymne may sing
Unto the God of Love, high heavens king.

. . . . . .

With all thy hart, with all thy soule and mind,
Thou must Him love, and His beheasts embrace;
All other loves, with which the world doth blind
Weake fancies, and stirre up affections base,
Thou must renounce and utterly displace,
And give thy selfe unto Him full and free,
That full and freely gave Himselfe for thee.

WHERE is the ântique glory now become,
That whylome wont in wemen to appeare?
Where be the brave atchievements doen by some?
Where be the batteilles, where the shield and speare,
And all the conquests which them high did reare,
That matter made for famous poets verse,
And boastfull men so oft abasht to heare?
Beene they all dead, and laide in dolefull herse?
Or doen they onely sleepe, and shall againe reverse?

From *The Faerie Queene.*

Is not His deed, what ever thing is donne
In heaven and earth? Did not He all create
To die againe? All ends that was begonne:
Their times in His eternall booke of fate
Are written sure, and have their certein date.
Who then can strive with strong necessitie,
That holds the world in his still chaunging state,
Or shunne the death ordaynd by destinie?
When houre of death is come, let none aske whence,
nor why.

From *The Faerie Queene.*

SHE is the rose, the glorie of the day,
And mine the primrose in the lowly shade:
Mine, ah! not mine; amisse I mine did say:
Not mine, but his, which mine awhile her made;
Mine to be his, with him to live for ay.
O that so faire a flowre so soon should fade,
And through untimely tempest fall away!

. . . . . .

And she, my love that was, my saint that is,
When she beholds from her celestiall throne
(In which shee ioyeth in eternall blis)
My bitter penance, will my case bemone,
And pittie me that living thus doo die;
For heavenly spirits have compassion
On mortall men, and rue their miserie.

From *Daphnaïda.*

AND is there care in heaven? And is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures bace,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is:—else much more wretched were the cace
Of men then beasts: But O! th' exceeding grace
Of Highest God that loves His creatures so,
And all His workes with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed Angels He sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve His wicked foe!

How oft do they their silver bowers leave
To come to succour us that succour want!
How oft do they with golden pineons cleave
The flitting skyes, like flying pursuivant,
Against fowle feendes to ayd us militant!
They for us fight, they watch and dewly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love and nothing for reward:
O, why should Hevenly God to men have such regard!

From *The Faerie Queene.*

Perigot. It fell upon a holy eve,
Willie. Hey, ho, holiday!
Per. When holy Fathers wont to shrieve;
Wil. Now ginneth this roundelay.
Per. Sitting upon a hill so hie,
Wil. Hey, ho, the high hill!
Per. I saw the bouncing Bonnibone,
Wil. Hey, ho, Bonnibell!
Per. Tripping over the dale alone;
Wil. She can trip it very well.
Per. A chapelet on her head she wore,
Wil. Hey, ho, chapelet!
Per. Of sweete violets therein was store,
Wil. She sweeter then the violet.
Per. As the bonilasse passed bye,
Wil. Hey, ho, bonilasse!
Per. She rovde at mee with glauncing eye,
Wil. As cleare as the cristall glasse:
Per. All as the sunny beame so bright,
Wil. Hey, ho, the sunne-beame!
Per. Glaunceth from Phœbus face forthright,
Wil. So love into thy heart did streame.

From *The Shepheards Calender.*

Perigot. THE glaunce into my heart did glide,
Willie. Hey, ho, the glyder!
Per. Therewith my soule was sharply gryde,
Wil. Such woundes soon wexen wider.
Per. Hasting to raunch the arrowe out,
Wil. Hey, ho, Perigot!
Per. I left the head in my heart-root,
Wil. It was a desperate shot.
Per. There it ranckleth, aye more and more,
Wil. Hey, ho, the arrow!
Per. Ne can I find salve for my sore,
Wil. Love is a cureless sorrow.
Per. But whether in paynefull love I pyne,
Wil. Hey, ho, pinching payne!
Per. Or thrive in wealth, she shalbe mine,
Wil. But if thou can her obtaine.
Per. So learnd I love on a holy eve,
Wil. Hey, ho, holy-day!
Per. That ever since my heart did greve,
Wil. Now endeth our roundelay.

From *The Shepheards Calender.*

WHAT vertue is so fitting for a Knight,
Or for a Ladie whom a Knight should love,
As Curtesie; to beare themselves aright
To all of each degree as doth behove?
For whether they be placed high above
Or low beneath, yet ought they well to know
Their good; that none them rightly may reprove
Of rudenesse for not yeelding what they owe:
Great skill it is such duties timely to bestow.

From *The Faerie Queene.*

Lo! how finely the Graces can it foote
To the Instrument:
They dauncen deffly, and singen soote,
In their meriment.
Wants not a fourth Grace, to make the daunce even?
Let that rowme to my Lady bee yeven.
She shalbe a Grace,
To fill the fourth place,
And reigne with the rest in heaven.

. . . . . .

Bring hether the pincke and purple cullambine,
With gelliflowres;
Bring coronations, and sops in wine,
Worne of paramoures:
Strowe mee the grounde with daffadowndillies,
And cowslips, and kingcups, and loved lillies:
The pretie pawnce
And the chevisaunce,
Shall match with the fayre flowre Delice.

From *The Shepheards Calender.*

So forth issew'd the Seasons of the yeare:
First, lusty Spring, all dight in leaves of flowres
That freshly budded and new bloosmes did beare,
In which a thousand birds had built their bowres
That sweetly sung to call forth paramours;
And in his hand a javelin he did beare,
And on his head (as fit for warlike stoures)
A guilt engraven morion he did weare;
That as some did him love, so others did him feare.

From *The Faerie Queene.*

S. T. COLERIDGE

THEREFORE all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eve-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

From *Frost at Midnight.*

TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY

On the wide level of a mountain's head
(I knew not where, but 'twas some faery place)
Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails outspread,
Two lovely children run an endless race,
A sister and a brother!
That far outstripp'd the other;
Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
And looks and listens for the boy behind:
For he, alas! is blind!
O'er rough and smooth with even step he passed,
And knows not whether he be first or last.

ALAS! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain.

. . . . .

But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between;—
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

From *Christabel.*

—We receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth,
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the Earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

From *Dejection: an Ode.*

. . . . .

He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.
He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

From *The Ancient Mariner*.

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION

Do you ask what the birds say? The sparrow, the dove,
The linnet and thrush say, 'I love and I love!'
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong;
What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,
And singing, and loving—all come back together.
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings; and for ever sings he—
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me!"

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB

WHERE is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
Where may the grave of that good man be?—
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree!
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roared in the winter alone,
Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown,—
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust;—
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

IMAGINATION; honourable aims;
Free commune with the choir that cannot die;
Science and song; delight in little things,
The buoyant child surviving in the man;
Fields, forests, ancient mountains, ocean, sky,
With all their voices—O dare I accuse
My earthly lot as guilty of my spleen,
Or call my destiny niggard! O no! no!
It is her largeness, and her overflow,
Which being incomplete, disquieteth me so!

In many ways doth the full heart reveal
The presence of the love it would conceal;
But in far more th' estranged heart lets know
The absence of the love, which yet it fain would show.

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

From *Love*.

HYMN

Before sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni

AWAKE, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my Heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.

. . . . . .
. . . Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense, from the Earth!
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

I KNOW a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
Thin grass and king-cups grow within the paths.
But never elsewhere in one place I knew
So many nightingales; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's song,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug jug,
And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
Stirring the air with such a harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might almost
Forget it was not day!

From *The Nightingale.*

SHE wept with pity and delight,
She blush'd with love, and virgin shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepp'd aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She press'd me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, look'd up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calm'd her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

From *Love.*

'Twas day! But now few, large, and bright
The stars are round the crescent moon!
And now it is a dark warm night,
The balmiest of the month of June!
A glow-worm fallen, and on the marge remounting
Shines and its shadow shines, fit stars for our sweet fountain.

. . . . . .

The shadows dance upon the wall,
By the still dancing fire-flames made;
And now they slumber, moveless all!
And now they melt to one deep shade!
But not from me shall this mild darkness steal thee:
I dream thee with mine eyes, and at my heart I feel thee!

From *A Day-Dream.*

If I had but two little wings,
And were a little feathery bird,
To you I'd fly, my dear!
But thoughts like these are idle things
And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly:
I'm always with you in my sleep!
The world is all one's own.
But then one wakes, and where am I?
All, all alone.

Sleep stays not, though a monarch bids:
So I love to wake ere break of day:
For though my sleep be gone,
Yet while 'tis dark, one shuts one's lids,
And still dreams on.

THE moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

From *Christabel.*

WORK WITHOUT HOPE

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter, slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?
Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And hope without an object cannot live.

HUSH! my heedless feet from under
Slip the crumbling banks for ever:
Like echoes to a distant thunder,
They plunge into the gentle river.
The river-swans have heard my tread,
And startle from their reedy bed.
O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure
  Your movements to some heavenly tune!
O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
  To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
To sleep by day and wake all night.

From *Lewti.*

FANCY *IN NUBIBUS*

O! it is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or let the easily persuaded eyes
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
Of a friend's fancy; or with head bent low
And cheek aslant see rivers flow of gold
'Twixt crimson banks; and then, a traveller, go
From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous land!
Or list'ning to the tide, with closed sight,
Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand
By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

AROUND, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

From *The Ancient Mariner.*

DEW-DROPS are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismist.
Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

From *Youth and Age.*

—— O ! that they could return
Those blessed days that imitated heaven,
When we two wont to walk at even-tide ;
When we saw nought but beauty ; when we heard
The voice of that Almighty One who loved us
In every gale that breathed, and wave that murmur'd !
O we have listen'd, even till high-wrought pleasure
Hath half assumed the countenance of grief,
And the deep sigh seemed to heave up a weight
Of bliss, that pressed too heavy on the heart.

From *Remorse.*

ALL this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen:
Yon crescent Moon as fixed as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel how beautiful they are!

From *Dejection, an Ode.*

O LADY, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
Whence learn'd you that heroic measure?

There crowd your finely-fibred frame,
All living faculties of bliss;
And Genius to your cradle came,
His forehead wreathed with lambent flame,
And bending low, with godlike kiss
Breathed in a more celestial life;
But boasts not many a fair compeer,
A heart as sensitive to joy and fear?
And some, perchance, might wage an equal strife,
Some few, to nobler being wrought,
Co-rivals in the nobler gift of thought.

From *Ode to Georgiana.*

BUT thou, . . . ! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself.
Great universal Teacher! he shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

From *Frost at Midnight.*

Ye Clouds! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may control!
Ye Ocean-Waves! that wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws!
Ye Woods! that listen to the night-birds singing,
Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging,
Have made a solemn music of the wind!

. . . . . .

O ye loud Waves! and O ye Forests high!
And O ye Clouds that far above me soared!
Thou rising Sun! thou blue rejoicing Sky!
Yea, everything that is and will be free!
Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

From *France, an Ode.*

THE night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

From *Christabel.*

A SOLILOQUY

UNCHANGED within to see all changed without
Is a blank lot and hard to bear, no doubt.
Yet why at others' wanings should'st thou fret?
Then only might'st thou feel a just regret,
Hadst thou withheld thy love or hid thy light
In selfish forethought of neglect and slight.
O wiselier then, from feeble yearnings freed,
While, and on whom, thou may'st—shine on! nor heed
Whether the object by reflected light
Return thy radiance or absorb it quite:
And though thou notest from thy safe recess
Old friends burn dim, like lamps in noisome air,
Love them for what they are; nor love them less,
Because to thee they are not what they were.

BEYOND the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

From *The Ancient Mariner.*

SONG

A SUNNY shaft did I behold,
From sky to earth it slanted:
And poised therein a bird so bold—
Sweet bird, thou wert enchanted!
He sank, he rose, he twinkled, he trolled
Within that shaft of sunny mist;
His eyes of fire, his beak of gold,
All else of amethyst!

And thus he sang: "Adieu! Adieu!
Love's dreams prove seldom true.
The blossoms, they make no delay:
The sparkling dew-drops will not stay.
Sweet month of May,
We must away;
Far, far away!
To-day! to-day!"

From *Zapolya*.

. . . . .

THE night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is gray:
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

From *Christabel.*

HERRICK

FIRST, April, she with mellow showers
Opens the way for early flowers;
Then after her comes smiling May,
In a more rich and sweet array;
Next enters June, and brings us more
Jems then those two that went before;
Then, lastly, July comes, and she
More wealth brings in than all those three.

WHEN I consider, dearest, thou dost stay
But here awhile, to languish and decay;
Like to these garden glories, which here be
The flowrie sweet resemblances of thee:
With griefe of heart, methinks, I thus doe cry,
Wo'd thou hadst ne'r been born, or might'st not die.

TO ELECTRA

I DARE not aske a kisse,
I dare not beg a smile;
Lest having that, or this,
I might grow proud the while.

No, no, the utmost share
Of my desire shall be,
Onely to kisse that aire
That lately kissed thee.

TO DIANEME

SWEET, be not proud of those two eyes,
Which, star-like, sparkle in their skies;
Nor be you proud, that you can see
All hearts your captives, yours yet free;
Be you not proud of that rich haire,
Which wantons with the love-sick aire;
When as that rubie which you weare,
Sunk from the tip of your soft eare,
Will last to be a precious stone,
When all your world of beautie's gone.

OF LOVE

How love came in, I do not know,
Whether by th' eye, or eare, or no;
Or whether with the soule it came,
At first, infused with the same;
Whether in part 'tis here or there,
Or, like the soule, whole everywhere,
This troubles me; but I as well
As any other, this can tell;
Then when from hence she does depart,
The out-let then is from the heart.

THE BRACELET TO JULIA

WHY I tye about thy wrist,
Julia, this my silken twist;
For what other reason is 't,
But to shew thee how in part
Thou my pretty captive art?
But thy bond-slave is my heart;
'Tis but silke that bindeth thee,
Knap the thread and thou art free;
But 'tis otherwise with me;
I am bound, and fast bound so,
That from thee I cannot go;
If I co'd, I wo'd not so.

TO ANTHEA

WHO MAY COMMAND HIM ANYTHING

BID me to live, and I will live
Thy Protestant to be;
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free,
As in the whole world thou canst find,
That heart Ile give to thee.

. . . . .

Bid me to weep, and I will weep,
While I have eyes to see;
And having none, yet I will keep
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despaire, and Ile despaire,
Under that cypresse tree;
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en Death, to die for thee.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me;
And hast command of every part,
To live and die for thee.

HOW THE WALL-FLOWER CAME FIRST, AND WHY SO CALLED

WHY this flower is now call'd so,
List, sweet maids, and you shal know.
Understand, this first-ling was
Once a brisk and bonny lasse,
Kept as close as Danae was;
Who a sprightly Springall lov'd:
And to have it fully prov'd,
Up she got upon a wall,
Tempting down to slide withall;
But the silken twist unty'd,
So she fell; and bruis'd, she dy'd.
Love, in pitty of the dead,
And her loving lucklesse speed,
Turn'd her to this plant, we call
Now The Flower of the Wall.

TO DAISIES, NOT TO SHUT SO SOONE.

SHUT not so soon;-the dull-ey'd night
Ha's not as yet begunne
To make a seisure on the light,
Or to seale up the sun.

No marigolds yet closed are,
No shadows great appeare;
Nor doth the early shepheards starre
Shine like a spangle here.

Stay but till my Julia close
Her life-begetting eye;
And let the whole world then dispose
It selfe to live or dye.

TO THE WATER NYMPHS, DRINKING AT THE FOUNTAIN

REACH with your whiter hands to me,
Some christall of the spring;
And I about the cup shall see
Fresh lillies flourishing.

Or else, sweet nymphs, do you but this;
To' th' glasse your lips encline;
And I shall see by that one kisse,
The water turn'd to wine.

SWEET AMARILLIS

SWEET Amarillis, by a spring's
Soft and soule-melting murmurings,
Slept; and thus sleeping, thither flew
A Robin Red-breast; who at view,
Not seeing her at all to stir,
Brought leaves and moss to cover her:
But while he, perking, there did prie
About the arch of either eye,
The lid began to let out day,
At which poore Robin flew away;
And seeing her not dead, but all disleav'd,
He chirp'd for joy, to see himself deceiv'd.

LIFE of my life, take not so soone thy flight,
But stay the time till we have bade good night,
Thou hast both wind and tide with thee; thy way
As soone dispatcht is by the night as day.
Let us not then so rudely henceforth goe
Till we have wept, kist, sigh't, shook hands, or so.
There's paine in parting, and a kind of hell
When once true lovers take their last farewell.
What? shall we two our endlesse leaves take here
Without a sad looke, or a solemne teare?
He knowes not love that hath not this truth proved,
Love is most loth to leave the thing beloved.
Pay we our vowes and goe, yet when we part,
Then, even then, I will bequeath my heart
Into thy loving hands; for Ile keep none
To warme my breast, when thou my pulse art gone.

. . . . . .

WHAT though my harp and viol be
Both hung upon the willow-tree?
What though my bed be now my grave,
And for my house I darknesse have?
What though my healthfull days are fled,
And I lie numbred with the dead?
Yet I have hope, by Thy great power
To spring, though now a wither'd flower.

. . . . . .

Our present teares here, not our present laughter,
Are but the handsells of our joyes hereafter.

GOOD PRECEPTS

IN all thy need, be thou possest
Still with a well-prepared brest;
Nor let the shackles make thee sad;
Thou canst but have what others had.
And this for comfort thou must know,
Times that are ill won't still be so:
Clouds will not ever powre down raine,
A sullen day will cleere againe.
First peales of thunder we must heare,
Then lutes and harpes shall stroke the eare.

TO GOD

WITH golden censers, and with incense, here
Before thy virgin altar I appeare,
To pay thee what I owe, since what I see
In or without, all, all belongs to Thee.
Where shall I now begin to make, for one
Least loane of thine, half restitution?
Alas! I cannot pay a jot; therefore
I 'le kisse the tally, and confesse the score,
Ten thousand talents lent me, thou dost write;
'Tis true, my God; but I can't pay one mite.

CHRIST'S PART

CHRIST, He requires still, wheresoe'ıe He comes
To feed or lodge, to have the best of roomes;
Give Him the choice; grant Him the nobler part
Of all the house; the best of all 's the heart.

UPON TIME

TIME was upon
The wing, to flie away;
And I cal'd on
Him but a while to stay;
But he 'd be gone,
For ought that I could say.

He held out then
A writing, as he went,
And askt me, when
False man would be content
To pay agen,
What God and nature lent.

An houre-glasse,
In which were sands but few,
As he did passe,
He shew'd, and told me too,
Mine end near was,
And so away he flew.

ETERNITIE

O YEARES and age! Farewell:
Behold I go,
Where I do know
Infinitie to dwell.

And these mine eyes shall see
All times, how they
Are lost i' th' sea
Of vast eternitie,

Where never moone shall sway,
The starres; but she,
And night, shall be
Drown'd in one endlesse day.

TO BLOSSOMS

FAIRE pledges of a fruitfull tree,
Why doe yee fall so fast?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here a while,
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What, were yee borne to be
An houre or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pitie Nature brought yee forth,
Meerly to shew your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'r so brave;
And after they have shown their pride
Like you a while, they glide
Into the grave.

AMONG the mirtles as I walkt,
Love and my sighs thus intertalkt;
Tell me, said I, in deep distresse,
Where I may find my shepardesse.
Thou foole, said Love, know'st thou not this?
In every thing that 's sweet, she is.
In yond' carnation goe and seek,
There thou shalt find her lip and cheek;
In that ennamel'd pansie by,
There thou shalt have her curious eye;
In bloome of peach and rose's bud,
There waves the streamer of her blood.
'Tis true, said I, and thereupon
I went to pluck them one by one,
To make of parts an union;
But on a sudden all were gone.
At which I stopt; said Love, these be,
The true resemblances of thee;
For as these flowers, thy joyes must die;
And in the turning of an eye;
And all thy hopes of her must wither,
Like those short sweets ere knit together.

THE OLIVE BRANCH

SADLY I walk't within the field,
To see what comfort it wo'd yeeld;
And as I went my private way,
An olive branch before me lay;
And seeing it, I made a stay,
And took it up, and view'd it; then
Kissing the omen, said Amen;
Be, be it so, and let this be
A divination unto me;
That in short time my woes shall cease,
And love shall crown my end with peace.

TIME steals away like to a stream,
And we glide hence away with them:
No sound recalls the houres once fled,
Or roses, being withered;
Nor us, my friend, when we are lost,
Like to a deaw, or melted frost.
Then live we mirthfull while we should,
And turn the iron age to gold;
Let 's feast and frolick, sing and play,
And thus lesse last, than live our day.

From *An Advisive Verse to his Friend.*

PANSIES

FROLICK virgins once these were,
Overloving, living here;
Being here their ends deny'd
Ran for sweet-hearts mad, and di'd.
Love, in pitie of their teares,
And their losse in blooming yeares,
For their restlesse here-spent houres,
Gave them hearts-ease turn'd to flow'rs.

TO SYCAMORES

I 'M sick of love; O let me lie
Under your shades, to sleep or die!
Either is welcome; so I have
Or here my bed, or here my grave.
Why do you sigh, and sob, and keep
Time with the tears that I do weep?
Say, have ye sence, or, do you prove
What crucifixions are in love?
I know ye do; and that's the why
You sigh for love as well as I.

TO DIANEME

I CO'D but see thee yesterday
  Stung by a fretfull bee;
And I the javelin suckt away,
  And heal'd the wound in thee.

A thousand thorns, and bryars, and stings
  I have in my poore brest;
Yet ne'r can see that salve which brings
  My passions any rest.

As love shall help me, I admire
  How thou canst sit and smile,
To see me bleed, and not desire
  To stench the blood the while.

If thou, compos'd of gentle mould,
  Art so unkind to me;
What dismall stories will be told
  Of those that cruell be?

TO PRIMROSES FILL'D WITH MORNING-DEW

WHY doe ye weep, sweet babes? Can teares
Speak griefe in you,
Who were but borne
Just as the modest morne
Teem'd her refreshing dew?

. . . . .

Speak, wimp'ring younglings, and make known
The reason why
Ye droop and weep.
Is it for want of sleep,
Or childish lullabie?
Or that ye have not seen as yet
The violet?
Or brought a kisse
From that sweet-heart to this?
No, no, this sorrow shown
By your teares shed,
Wo'd have this lecture read,
That things of greatest, so of meanest worth,
Conceiv'd with grief are, and with teares brought forth.

TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

GATHER ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old time is still a flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the Sun,
The higher he 's a getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And neerer he 's to setting.

That age is best, which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent the worse and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, goe marry;
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

DELIGHT IN DISORDER

A SWEET disorder in the dresse
Kindles in cloathes a wantonnesse ;
A lawne about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction ;
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthralls a crimson stomacher ;
A cuffe neglectfull, and thereby
Ribbands to flow confusedly ;
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticote ;
A careless shooe-string, in whose tye
I see a wilde civility ;
Doe more bewitch me, then when art
Is too precise in every part.

TO DAFFADILLS

FAIRE Daffadills, we weep to see
You haste away so soone;
As yet the early rising sun
Has not attain'd his noone.
Stay, stay,
Untill the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or any thing.
We die
As your hours doe, and drie
Away,
Like to the summer's raine;
Or as the pearles of morning's dew,
Ne'r to be found againe.

COME, let us goe, while we are in our prime,
And take the harmlesse follie of the time.
We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short, and our dayes run
As fast away as do's the sunne;
And as a vapour, or a drop of raine
Once lost, can ne'r be found againe;
So when or you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade;
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drown'd with us in endlesse night.
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying,
Come, my Corinna, come, let 's goe a Maying.

From *Corinna's going a Maying*.

SHELLEY

THE blasts of autumn drive the winged seeds
Over the earth,—next come the snows, and rain,
And frost, and storms, which dreary winter leads
Out of his Scythian cave, a savage train;
Behold! Spring sweeps over the world again,
Shedding soft dews from her ethereal wings;
Flowers on the mountains, fruits over the plain,
And music on the waves and woods she flings,
And love on all that lives, and calm on lifeless things.

O Spring, of hope, and love, and youth, and gladness
Wind-winged emblem! brightest, best and fairest,
Whence comest thou, when, with dark winter's sadness
The tears that fade in sunny smiles thou sharest;
Sister of joy, thou art the child who wearest
Thy mother's dying smile, tender and sweet;
Thy mother Autumn, for whose grave thou bearest
Fresh flowers, and beams like flowers, with gentle feet,
Disturbing not the leaves which are her winding-sheet.

From *The Revolt of Islam.*

THE PINE FOREST

DEAREST, best and brightest,
Come away,
To the woods and to the fields!
Dearer than this fairest day,
Which like thee to those in sorrow,
Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow
To the rough year just awake
In its cradle in the brake.

The eldest of the hours of spring,
Into the winter wandering,
Looks upon the leafless wood;
And the banks all bare and rude
Found it seems this halcyon morn,
In February's bosom born,
Bending from heaven, in azure mirth,
Kissed the cold forehead of the earth,
And smiled upon the silent sea,
And bade the frozen streams be free;
And waked to music all the fountains,
And breathed upon the rigid mountains
And made the wintry world appear
Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

. . . . .

In the atmosphere we breathe,
As buds grow red when the snow-storms flee,
From spring gathering up beneath,
Whose mild winds shake the elder brake,
And the wandering herdsmen know
That the white-thorn soon will blow:
Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Peace,
When they struggle to increase,
Are to us as soft winds be
To shepherd boys, the prophecy
Which begins and ends in thee.

Chorus of Spirits.
From *Prometheus Unbound.*

BRIGHT clouds float in heaven,
Dew-stars gleam on earth,
Waves assemble on ocean,
They are gathered and driven
By the storm of delight, by the panic of glee!
They shake with emotion,
They dance in their mirth;
But where are ye?

The pine boughs are singing
Old songs with new gladness,
The billows and fountains
Fresh music are flinging,
Like the notes of a spirit from land and from sea;
The storms mock the mountains
With the thunder of gladness;
But where are ye?

From *Prometheus Unbound.*

SONG

FALSE friend, wilt thou smile or weep
When my life is laid asleep?
Little cares for a smile or tear,
The clay-cold corpse upon the bier!
  Farewell! Heigho!
  What is this whispers low?
There is a snake in thy smile, my dear;
And bitter poison within thy tear.

Sweet sleep, were death like to thee,
Or if thou couldst mortal be,
I would close these eyes of pain;
When to wake! Never again.
  O world! Farewell!
  Listen to the passing bell!
It says, thou and I must part,
With a light and a heavy heart.

From *The Cenci.*

THE FUGITIVES

THE waters are flashing,
The white hail is dashing,
The lightnings are glancing,
The hoar-spray is dancing
Away!

The whirlwind is rolling,
The thunder is tolling,
The forest is swinging,
The minster bells ringing—
Come away!

The Earth is like Ocean,
Wreck-strewn and in motion:
Bird, beast, man and worm
Have crept out of the storm—
Come away!

. . . . .

THE autumnal winds, as if spell-bound, had made
A natural couch of leaves in that recess,
Which seasons none disturbed, but in the shade
Of flowering parasites, did spring love to dress
With their sweet blooms the wintry loneliness
Of those dead leaves, shedding their stars, whene'er
The wandering wind her nurslings might caress;
Whose intertwining fingers ever there,
Made music wild and soft that filled the listening air.

From *The Revolt of Islam.*

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory——
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose-leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed:
And so thy thoughts, when Thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

TO THE MOON

ART thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever-changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

LIFE may change, but it may fly not:
Hope may vanish, but can die not;
Truth be veiled, but still it burneth;
Love repulsed,—but it returneth.

From *Hellas.*

MUTABILITY

THE flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow dies;
All that we wish to stay
Tempts and then flies;
What is this world's delight?
Lightning that mocks the night,
Brief even as bright.

Virtue, how frail it is!
Friendship too rare!
Love, how it sells poor bliss
For proud despair!
But we, though soon they fall,
Survive their joy and all
Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,
Whilst flowers are gay,
Whilst eyes that change ere night
Make glad the day;
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
Dream thou—and from thy sleep
Then wake to weep.

TO NIGHT

. . . . . .

WHEN I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?—and I replied,
No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

SONG

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,
Spirit of Delight!
Wherefore hast thou left me now
Many a day and night?
Many a weary night and day
'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me
Win thee back again?
With the joyous and the free
Thou wilt scoff at pain.
Spirit false! thou hast forgot
All but those who need thee not.

. . . . .

WHEN passion's trance is overpast,
If tenderness and truth could last
Or live, whilst all wild feelings keep
Some mortal slumber, dark and deep,
I should not weep, I should not weep!

It were enough to feel, to see
Thy soft eyes gazing tenderly,
And dream the rest—and burn and be
The secret food of fires unseen,
Couldst thou but be as thou hast been.

After the slumber of the year
The woodland violets reappear,
All things revive in field or grove,
And sky and sea, but two, which move,
And for all others, life and love.

A LAMENT

O World ! O Life ! O Time !
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before ;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—O never more !

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight :
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more—O never more !

SONG

A widow bird sate mourning for her Love
Upon a wintry bough;
The frozen wind crept on above,
The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,
No flower upon the ground,
And little motion in the air
Except the mill-wheel's sound.

SONG

I LOVE all that thou lovest,
  Spirit of Delight!
The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,
  And the starry night;
Autumn evening, and the morn
When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms
  Of the radiant frost:
I love waves, and winds, and storms,
  Everything almost
Which is Nature's, and may be
Untainted by man's misery.

. . . . .

I love Love—though he has wings,
  And like light can flee,
But above all other things,
  Spirit, I love thee—
Thou art love and life! O come!
Make once more my heart thy home!

MUTABILITY

WE are as clouds that veil the midnight moon;
How restlessly they speed, and gleam, and quiver,
Streaking the darkness radiantly!—yet soon
Night closes round, and they are lost for ever:

Or like forgotten lyres, whose dissonant strings
Give various response to each varying blast,
To whose frail frame no second motion brings
One mood or modulation like the last.

We rest,—A dream has power to poison sleep;
We rise,—One wandering thought pollutes the day;
We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or weep;
Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away:

It is the same!—For, be it joy or sorrow,
The path of its departure still is free:
Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his morrow;
Nought may endure but Mutability.

If solitude hath ever led thy steps,
To the wild ocean's echoing shore,
And thou hast lingered there,
Until the sun's broad orb
Seemed resting on the burnished wave,
Thou must have marked the lines
Of purple gold, that motionless
Hung o'er the sinking sphere:
Thou must have marked the billowy clouds
Edged with intolerable radiancy
Towering like rocks of jet
Crowned with a diamond wreath.
And yet there is a moment,
When the sun's highest point
Peeps like a star o'er ocean's western edge,
When those far clouds of feathery gold,
Shaded with deepest purple, gleam
Like islands on a dark blue sea;
Then has thy fancy soared above the earth
And furled its wearied wing
Within the Fairy's fane.

From *Queen Mab.*

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE fountains mingle with the river
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single,
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle—
Why not I with thine?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother:
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea—
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

SPIRIT of Beauty, that dost consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
Of human thought or form, where art thou gone?
Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?
Ask why the sunlight not for ever
Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain river;
Why aught should fail and fade that once is shown;
Why fear and dream and death and birth
Cast on the daylight of this earth
Such gloom, why Man has such a scope
For love and hate, despondency and hope?

From *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty.*

THE day becomes more solemn and serene
When noon is past: there is a harmony
In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,
Which through the summer is not heard or seen,
As if it could not be, as if it had not been!
Thus let thy power, which like the truth
Of nature on my passive youth
Descended, to my outward life supply
Its calm, to one who worships thee,
And every form containing thee,
Whom, Spirit fair, thy spells did bind
To fear himself, and love all human kind.

From *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty.*

TO A SKYLARK.

HAIL to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

. . . . . .

ART and eloquence,
And all the shows o' the world are frail and vain
To weep a loss that turns their light to shade.
It is a woe too 'deep for tears,' when all
Is reft at once, when some surpassing Spirit,
Whose light adorned the world around it, leaves
Those who remain behind, nor sobs nor groans,
The passionate tumult of a clinging hope;
But pale despair and cold tranquillity,
Nature's vast frame, the web of human things,
Birth and the grave, that are not as they were.

From *Alastor*

ALAS for Liberty,
If numbers, wealth or unfulfilling years,
Or fate, can quell the free!
Alas for Virtue, when
Torments, or contumely, or the sneers
Of erring-judging men,
Can break the heart where it abides.
Alas! if Love, whose smile makes this obscure
world splendid,
Can change, with all its false times and tides,
Like hope and terror—
Alas for Love!
And Truth, who wanderest lone and unbefriended,
If thou canst veil thy lie-consuming mirror
Before the dazzled eyes of Error,
Alas for Thee! Image of the Above!

From *Hellas.*

THE splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

. . . . . .

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek,
Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

From *Adonais.*

A LAMENT

SWIFTER far than summer's flight,
Swifter far than youth's delight,
Swifter far than happy night,
  Art thou come and gone:
As the earth when leaves are dead,
As the night when sleep is sped,
As the heart when joy is fled,
  I am left lone, alone.

The swallow Summer comes again,
The owlet Night resumes her reign,
But the wild swan Youth is fain
  To fly with thee, false as thou.
My heart each day desires the morrow,
Sleep itself is turned to sorrow,
Vainly would my winter borrow
  Sunny leaves from any bough.

. . . . .

EARTH, our bright home, its mountains and its waters,
And the ethereal shapes which are suspended
Over its green expanse, and those fair daughters,
The clouds, of Sun and Ocean, who have blended
The colours of the air since first extended
It cradled the young world, none wandered forth
To see or feel: a darkness had descended
On every heart: the light which shows its worth,
Must among gentle thoughts and fearless take its birth.

From *The Revolt of Islam.*

THE QUESTION

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the way,
Bare winter suddenly was changed to spring,
And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kissed it and then fled, as thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearled Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender bluebells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

AND in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cowbind and the moonlight-coloured May,
And cherry blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
Was the bright dew yet drained not by the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray;
And flowers azure, black and streaked with gold,
Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad flag flowers, purple prankt with white
And starry river buds among the sedge,
And floating water-lilies broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.
Methought that of these visionary flowers
I made a nosegay— . . . .
. . . . And then, elate and gay,
I hastened to the spot whence I had come
That I might there present it!—Oh! to whom?

THE CLOUD

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet birds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

. . . . .

W. MORRIS

FAIR is the night and fair the day,
Now April is forgot of May,
Now into June May falls away;
Fair day, fair night, O give me back
The tide that all fair things did lack
Except my love, except my sweet!

ALL things were moving; as his hurried feet
Passed by, within the flowery swathe he heard
The sweeping of the scythe, the swallow fleet
Rose over him, the sitting partridge stirred
On the field's edge; the brown bee by him whirred,
Or murmured in the clover flowers below.
Fair was the day, the honied bean-fields' scent
The west wind bore unto him; o'er the way
The glittering noisy poplar leaves did play.

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

DIP down your dear face in the dewy grass, O love!
And ever let the sweet slim harebells, tenderly hung,
Kiss both your parted lips; and I will hang above,
And try to sing that song the dreamy harper sung.

From *Rapunzel.*

AT ending of his song
They heard the bubbling river speed along,
Nor did they miss that doubtful noise to hear
The rising night-wind through the branches bear,
Till sleep fell on them, and the watch alone
Waked in that place, and heard the distant moan
Grow louder as the dead night stiller grew,
And fuller of all fear, till daylight drew
A faint wan streak between the thinner trees,
And in their yellowing foliage the breeze
Made a new sound, that through their waking dream
Like to the surging sea well-nigh did seem.

From *Life and Death of Jason*

'O LOVE, what hurteth me?
When first the sweetness of my life I knew,
Not this I felt, but when I first saw thee
A little pain and great felicity
Rose up within me, and thy talk e'en now
Made pain and pleasure ever greater grow?'

'O sweet,' he said, 'this thing is even love,
Whereof I told thee; that all wise men fear,
But yet escape not; nay, to gods above,
Unless the old tales lie, it draweth near.
But let my happy ears I pray thee hear
Thy story too, and how thy blessed birth
Has made a heaven of this once lonely earth.'

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

FAIR was the morn to-day, the blossom's scent
Floated across the fresh grass, and the bees
With low vexed song from rose to lily went;
A gentle wind was in the heavy trees,
And thine eyes shone with joyous memories;
Fair was the early morn, and fair wert thou,
And I was happy—Ah, be happy now!

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

DAWN talks to-day
  Over dew-gleaming flowers,
Night flies away
  Till the resting of hours:
Fresh are thy feet
  And with dreams thine eyes glistening,
Thy still lips are sweet
  Though the world is a-listening.
O Love, set a word in my mouth for our meeting,
Cast thine arms round about me to stay my heart's beating!
  O fresh day, O fair day, O long day made ours!

From *Love is Enough.*

Eve shall kiss night,
And the leaves stir like rain
As the wind stealeth light
O'er the grass of the plain.
Unseen are thine eyes
'Mid the dreamy night's sleeping,
And on my mouth there lies
The dear rain of thy weeping.
Hold silence, love, speak not of the sweet day departed,
Cling close to me, love, lest I waken sad-hearted!
O kind day, O dear day, short day, come again!

From *Love is Enough*.

SOFT there shalt thou sleep, love, and sweet shall thy
dreams be,
And sweet thy awaking amidst of the wonder
Where thou art, who is nigh thee—and then, when thou
seest
How the rose-boughs hang in o'er the little loft window,
And the blue bowl with roses is close to thine hand,
And over thy bed is the quilt sewn with lilies,
And the loft is hung round with the green Southland
hangings,
And all smelleth sweet as the low door is opened,
And thou turnest to see me there standing, and holding
Such dainties as may be, thy new hunger to stay—
Then well may I hope that thou wilt not remember
Thine old woes for a moment in the freshness and
pleasure,
And that I shall be part of thy rest for a little.

From *Love is Enough.*

CALM the June evening was, no sign of strife
The clear sky showed; no storm grew round the sun,
Unhappy that his day of bliss was done;
Dumb was the sea, and if the beech-wood stirred,
'Twas with the nestling of the grey-winged bird
'Midst its thick leaves; and tho' the nightingale
Her ancient, hapless sorrow must bewail,
No more of woe there seemed in her song
Than such as doth to lovers' words belong,
Because their love is still unsatisfied.

. . . . . .

So passed the night, the moon arose and grew,
From off the sea a little west-wind blew,
Rustling the garden-leaves like sudden rain;
And ere the moon had 'gun to fall again
The wind grew cold, a change was in the sky,
And in deep silence did the dawn draw nigh.

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

BEHOLD, another eve I bid you see!

. . . . .

The sun is setting in the west, the sky
Is clear and hard, and no clouds come anigh
The golden orb, but further off they lie
Steel-grey and black, with edges red as blood,
And underneath them is the weltering flood
Of some huge sea, whose tumbling hills, as they
Turn restless sides about, are black or grey,
Or green, or glittering with the golden flame;
The wind has fallen now, but still the same
The mighty army moves, as if to drown
This lone, bare rock, whose sheer scarped sides of brown
Cast off the weight of waves, in clouds of spray.

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

O BITTER sea, tumultuous sea,
Full many an ill is wrought by thee!—
Unto the wasters of the land
Thou holdest out thy wrinkled hand;
And when they leave the conquered town,
Whose black smoke makes thy surges brown,
Driven betwixt thee and the sun,
As the long day of blood is done,
From many a league of glittering waves
Thou smilest on them and their slaves.

. . . . .

Yea, whoso sees thee from his door,
Must ever long for more and more;

. . . . . .

For as thou cravest, so he craves,
Until he rolls beneath thy waves.
Nor in some landlocked, unknown bay
Can satiate thee for one day.

From *The Life and Death of Jason*

GOLD on her head, and gold on her feet,
And gold where the hems of her kirtle meet,
And a golden girdle round my sweet;—
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

. . . . . .

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
I would kiss the place where the gold hems meet,
And the golden girdle round my sweet—
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

. . . . . .

Yet even now it is good to think,
While my few poor varlets grumble and drink
In my desolate hall, where the fires sink,—
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Of Margaret sitting glorious there,
In glory of gold and glory of hair,
And glory of glorious face most fair;—
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

From *The Eve of Crecy*.

FOR soon
The woods grew dark, as though they knew no noon;
The thunder growled about the high brown hills,
And the thin, wasted, shining summer rills
Grew joyful with the coming of the rain,
And doubtfully was shifting every vane
On the town spires, with changing gusts of wind;
Till came the storm-blast, sudden, cold, and blind,
'Twixt gorges of the mountains, and drove back
The light sea-breeze; then waxed the heavens black,
Until the lightning leapt from cloud to cloud,
With clattering thunder, and the piled-up crowd
Began to turn from steely blue to grey,
And toward the sea the thunder drew away,
Leaving the north-wind blowing steadily
The rain-clouds from Olympus; while the sea
Seemed mingled with the low clouds and the rain;
And one might think that never now again
The sunny grass would make a pleasant bed
For the spent limbs, and dreamy, languid head
Of sandalled nymph, forewearied with the chase.

From *Life and Death of Jason.*

How weary is it none can tell,
  How dismally the days go by!
I hear the tinkling of the bell,
  I see the cross against the sky.

The year wears round to autumn-tide,
  Yet comes no reaper to the corn;
The golden land is like a bride
  When first she knows herself forlorn—

She sits and weeps with all her hair
  Laid downward over tender hands;
For stained silk she hath no care,
  No care for broken ivory wands.

. . . .

He is not dead, but gone away.
  How many hours did she wait
For me, I wonder? Till the day
  Had faded wholly, and the gate

Clanged to behind returning knights?

From *Spell-bound.*

GOLD wings across the sea!
Grey light from tree to tree,
Gold hair beside my knee,
I pray thee come to me,
Gold wings!

. . . . .

No answer through the moonlit night;
No answer in the cold grey dawn;
No answer when the shaven lawn
Grew green, and all the roses bright.

. . . . .

There, with crooked arm upon the sill,
She look'd out, muttering dismally:
'There is no sail upon the sea,
No pennon on the empty hill.'

. . . . .

'And I have hope. He could not come,
But I can go to him and show
These new things I have got to know,
And make him speak, who has been dumb.'

From *Golden Wings.*

O THOU who clingest still to life and love,
Though nought of good, no God thou may'st discern,
Though nought that is, thine utmost woe can move,
Though no soul knows wherewith thine heart doth yearn,
Yet since thy weary lips no curse can learn,
Cast no least thing thou lovedst once away,
Since yet perchance thine eyes shall see the day.

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

'CAN the dead love, or is there any space
In their long sleep where they lay face to face
Soft as we do now? Can their pale lips plead
The pleas of love? or can their fixed eyes lead
Heart unto heart? or hast thou heard that they
Can wait from weary day to weary day,
And hope, as I will, while thou gatherest fame?
Can they have pleasure there e'en in a name,
A memory? is their pain a pleasure there,
Are tears sweet, and the longing sobs that wear
The hours away, when life and hope are gone?'

. . . . . .

'Ah, my beloved, lift that glorious head
And look upon me! put away the thought
Of time and death, and let all things be nought
But this love of to-day! and think of me
As if for ever I should seem to thee
As I am now—I will not go away.'

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

O DEATH, that maketh life so sweet,
O fear, with mirth before thy feet,
What have ye yet in store for us,
The conquerors, the glorious?
Men say, 'For fear that thou shouldst die
To-morrow, let to-day pass by
Flower-crowned and singing;' yet have we
Passed our to-day upon the sea,
. . . . . .
And listless when the day was done
Have scarcely hoped to see the sun
Dawn on the morrow of the earth,
Nor in our hearts have thought of mirth.
. . . . . .
Then cometh happy life again,
That payeth well our toil and pain
In that sweet hour, when all our woe
But as a pensive tale we know,
Nor yet remember deadly fear;
For surely now if death be near,
Unthought-of is it, and unseen
When sweet s, that hath bitter been.

From *Life and Death of Jason.*

'WOULD God, would God, that I had died
Before the accursed name of Love
My miserable heart did move!
Why did I leave thee in such wise,
False heart, with lovesome, patient eyes,
And soul intent to do thy will?
And why, *why* must I love thee still,
And long for thee, and cast on thee
Blessings wrung out of misery,
That will not bless thee, if in sooth
On my wrecked heart thou hast no ruth?
O come, come, come to me, my love,
If aught my heart thy heart may move,
For I am wretched and alone,
With head grown wild, heart turned to stone,
Come, if there yet be truth in thee!'

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

I HAVE dwelt a while with sorrow since we met, we twain,
in the wood:
I have mourned, while thou hast been merry, who deemest
the war-play good.
For I know the heart of the wilful and how thou wouldst
cast away
The rampart of thy life-days, and the wall of my happy day.
Yea I am the thrall of Sorrow; she hath stripped my
raiment off
And laid sore stripes upon me with many a bitter scoff.
Still bidding me remember that I come of the God-folk's
kin,
And yet for all my godhead no love of thee may win.

From *The House of the Wolfings.*

Is the house finished? Nay, come help to build
Walls that the sun of sorrow once did gild
Through many a bitter morn and hopeless eve,
That so at last in bliss ye may believe;
Then rest with me, and turn no more to tears,
For then no more by days, and months, and years,
By hours of pain come back, and joy passed o'er
We measure time that was—and is no more.

From *Love is Enough.*

AND thou, friend,
How might I deem that aught but death should end
Our love together? yea, and even now,
How shall I learn to hate thee, friend, though thou
Art changed into a shadow and a lie?

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

NOT on earth shall I learn this wisdom; and how shall I learn it then
When I lie alone in the grave-mound, and have no speech with men?
But for thee,—O doubt it nothing that my life shall live in thee,
And so shall we twain be loving in the days that yet shall be.

From *The House of the Wolfings*.

AH, son! years go by.
When we are young this year we call the worst
That we can know; this bitter day is cursed,
And no more such our hearts can bear, we say.
But yet as time from us falls fast away
There comes a day, son, when all this is fair
And sweet, to what, still living, we must bear.

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

STRANGE is it how the grieved heart bears
Long hours and days and months of woe,
As dull and leaden as they go,
And makes no sign, yea, and knows not
How great a burden it hath got
Upon it, till all suddenly
Some thought scarce heeded shall flit by,
That tears the veil as by it goes
With seeming careless hand, and shows
The shrinking soul that deep abyss
Of days to come all bare of bliss.

From *The Earthly Paradise*.

How can words measure misery, when the sun
Shines at its brightest over plague and ill?
How can I tell the woe of any one,
When the soft showers with fair-hued sweetness fill
Before the feet of those grief may not kill,
The tender meads of hopeful spring, that comes
With eager hours to mock all hopeless homes?

So let it pass, and ask me not to weigh
Grief against grief:—ye who have never woke
To wondering, ere came memory back, why day,
Bare, blank, immovable, upon you broke—
—Untold shall ye know all—to happy folk
All heaviest words no more of meaning bear
Than far-off bells saddening the summer air.

From *The Earthly Paradise.*

Now wendeth the sun westward, and weary grows the Earth
Of all the long day's doings in sorrow and in mirth ;
And as the great sun waneth, so doth my candle wane,
And its flickering flame desireth to rest and die again.

From *The House of the Wolfings.*

WHAT ! do men think of death ere it draws near?
Not so, else surely would they stint their strife,
For lengthening out their little span of life,
But where each found himself there should he sit,
Not moving hand or foot for thought of it,
Wherefore the gods, ...

. . . . . .

Have given them forgetfulness of death,
Longings and hopes, and joy in drawing breath,
And they live happy, knowing naught at all,
Nor what death is, where that shall chance to fall,
For while he lives, few minutes certainly
Does any man believe that he shall die.

From *The Life and Death of Jason.*

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,
  I cannot ease the burden of your fears,
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,
Or bring again the pleasure of past years—
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears,
Or hope again for aught that I can say,
  The idle singer of an empty day—

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,
  From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,
And, feeling kindly unto all the earth,
Grudge every minute as it passes by,
Made the more mindful that the sweet days die—
—Remember me a little then, I pray,
  The idle singer of an empty day.

From *The Earthly Paradise*

KEATS

Oh ! how I love, on a fair summer's eve,
When streams of light pour down the golden west,
And on the balmy zephyrs tranquil rest
The silver clouds, far—far away to leave
All meaner thoughts, and take a sweet reprieve
From little cares ; to find with easy quest,
A fragrant wild, with Nature's beauty drest,
And there into delight my soul deceive !

. . . . . .

THE HUMAN SEASONS

FOUR Seasons fill the measure of the year;
There are four seasons in the mind of man:
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:
He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's honied cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and, by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter, too, of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

EVER let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let winged Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night.

From *Fancy.*

FANCY, high-commission'd—send her!
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,
With a still, mysterious stealth:
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it.—

From *Fancy.*

ON THE SEA

It keeps eternal whisperings around
Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell
Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till the spell
Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy sound.
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,
That scarcely will the very smallest shell
Be mov'd for days from whence it sometime fell,
When last the winds of heaven were unbound.
Oh ye! who have your eye-balls vex'd and tir'd,
Feast them upon the wideness of the Sea;
Oh ye! whose ears are dinn'd with uproar rude,
Or fed too much with cloying melody,—
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and brood
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs quir'd.

THOU shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear;
Rustle of the reapèd corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn:
And, in the same moment—hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plum'd lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower,
Pearled with the self-same shower.

From *Fancy*.

BREATHE softly, flutes;
Be tender of your strings, ye soothing lutes;
Nor be the trumpet heard! O vain, O vain;
Not flowers budding in an April rain,
Nor breath of sleeping dove, nor river's flow,—
No, nor the Æolian twang of Love's own bow,
Can mingle music fit for the soft ear
Of goddess Cytherea!
Yet deign, white Queen of Beauty, thy fair eyes
On our soul's sacrifice.

From *Endymion.*

I STOOD tip-toe upon a little hill,
The air was cooling, and so very still,
That the sweet buds which with a modest pride
Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,
Their scantly leav'd and finely tapering stems,
Had not yet lost those starry diadems
Caught from the early sobbing of the morn.
The clouds were pure and white as flocks new shorn,
And fresh from the clear brook; sweetly they slept
On the blue fields of heaven, and then there crept
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves:
For not the very faintest motion could be seen
Of all the shades that slanted o'er the green.

THINK not of it, sweet one, so;—
  Give it not a tear;
Sigh thou may'st, and bid it go
  Any, any where.

Do not look so sad, sweet one,—
  Sad and fadingly;
Shed one drop, then it is gone,
  O 'twas born to die.

Still so pale? then, dearest, weep;
  Weep, I 'll count the tears,
And each one shall be a bliss
  For thee in after years.

Brighter has it left thine eyes
  Than a sunny rill;
And thy whispering melodies
  Are tenderer still.

Yet—as all things mourn awhile
  At fleeting blisses;
E'en let us too; but be our dirge
  A dirge of kisses.

WHEN by my solitary hearth I sit,
And hateful thoughts enwrap my soul in gloom;
When no fair dreams before my 'mind's eye' flit,
And the bare heath of life presents no bloom;
Sweet Hope, ethereal balm upon me shed,
And wave thy silver pinions o'er my head.

. . . . . .

Whene'er the fate of those I love most dear
Tells to my fearful breast a tale of sorrow,
O bright-eyed Hope, my morbid fancy cheer;
Let me awhile thy sweetest comforts borrow:
Thy heaven-born radiance around me shed,
And wave thy silver pinions o'er my head!

. . . . . .

And as, in sparkling majesty, a star
Gilds the bright summit of some gloomy cloud;
Brightening the half-veil'd face of heaven afar:
So when dark thoughts my boding spirit shroud,
Sweet Hope, celestial influence round me shed,
Waving thy silver pinions o'er my head.

From *To Hope.*

O SORROW,
Why dost borrow
Heart's lightness from the merriment of May?—
A lover would not tread
A cowslip on the head,
Though he should dance from eve till peep of day—
Nor any drooping flower
Held sacred for thy bower,
Wherever he may sport himself and play.

From *Endymion*.

LOVE in a hut, with water and a crust,
Is—Love, forgive us!—cinders, ashes, dust;
Love in a palace is perhaps at last
More grievous torment than a hermit's fast:—
That is a doubtful tale from faery land,
Hard for the non-elect to understand.

From *Lamia*.

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits.

From *Endymion.*

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
  Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd
  By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
  Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
    Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
  For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
    And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

From *Ode on Melancholy.*

WOMAN ! when I behold thee flippant, vain,
  Inconstant, childish, proud, and full of fancies ;
  Without that modest softening that enhances
The downcast eye, repentant of the pain
That its mild light creates to heal again :
  E'en then, elate, my spirit leaps, and prances,
  E'en then my soul with exultation dances
For that to love, so long, I 've dormant lain :
But when I see thee meek, and kind, and tender,
  Heavens ! how desperately do I adore
Thy winning graces ;—to be thy defender
  I hotly burn—to be a Calidore—
A very Red Cross Knight—a stout Leander—
  Might I be lov'd by thee like these of yore.

. . . . . .

'TWAS the morn: Apollo's upward fire
Made every eastern cloud a silvery pyre
Of brightness so unsully'd that therein
A melancholy spirit well might win
Oblivion, and melt out his essence fine
Into the winds: rain-scented eglantine
Gave temperate sweets to that well-wooing sun;
The lark was lost in him; cold springs had run
To warm their chilliest bubbles in the glass;
Man's voice was on the mountains; and the mass
Of nature's lives and wonders puls'd tenfold,
To feel this sun-rise and its glories old.

From *Endymion.*

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
  My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
  One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
  But being too happy in thine happiness,—
    That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
      In some melodious plot
  Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
    Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

. . . . . .

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
  Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
  Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
  White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
    Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
      And mid-May's eldest child,
  The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
    The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

From *Ode to a Nightingale.*

THOU wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that ofttimes hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in fairy lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

From *Ode to a Nightingale.*

AND she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,
  And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
  And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze;
She had no knowledge when the day was done,
And the new morn she saw not: but in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

. . . . . .

O Melancholy, linger here awhile!
  O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!
O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,
  Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh!
Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and smile;
Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits, heavily,
And make a pale light in your cypress glooms,
Tinting with silver wan your marble tombs.

From *Isabella*.

FAERY SONG

SHED no tear—O shed no tear !
The flower will bloom another year.
Weep no more—O weep no more !
Young buds sleep in the roots' white core,
Dry your eyes—O dry your eyes,
For I was taught in Paradise
To ease my breast of melodies—
Shed no tear.

Overhead—look overhead
'Mong the blossoms white and red—
Look up, look up—I flutter now
On this flush pomegranate bough—
See me—'tis this silvery bill
Ever cures the good man's ill—
Shed no tear—O shed no tear !
The flower will bloom another year.
Adieu—Adieu—I fly, adieu,
I vanish in the heaven's blue—
Adieu, Adieu !

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

THE poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with fun
He rests with ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

'Tis the pest
Of love, that fairest joys give most unrest;
That things of delicate and tenderest worth
Are swallow'd all, and made a seared dearth,
By one consuming flame: it doth immerse
And suffocate true blessings in a curse.
Half-happy by comparison of bliss,
Is miserable.

From *Endymion.*

SONNET

AFTER dark vapours have oppress'd our plains
For a long dreary season, comes a day
Born of the gentle South, and clears away
From the sick heavens all unseemly stains.
The anxious month, relieved of its pains,
Takes as a long-lost right the feel of May;
The eyelids with the passing coolness play
Like rose-leaves with the drip of Summer rains.
The calmest thoughts come round us; as of leaves
Budding—fruit ripening in stillness—Autumn suns
Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves—
Sweet Sappho's cheek—a smiling infant's breath—
The gradual sand that through an hour-glass runs—
A woodland rivulet—a Poet's death.

HEARD melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

. . . . . .

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,'—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

From *Ode on a Grecian Urn*.

SONNET

WHY did I laugh to-night? No voice will tell:
No God, no Demon of severe response,
Deigns to reply from Heaven or from Hell.
Then to my human heart I turn at once.
Heart! Thou and I are here sad and alone;
I say, why did I laugh? O mortal pain!
O Darkness! Darkness! ever must I moan,
To question Heaven and Hell and Heart in vain,
Why did I laugh? I know this Being's lease,
My fancy to its utmost blisses spreads;
Yet would I on this very midnight cease,
And the world's gaudy ensigns see in shreds;
Verse, Fame, and Beauty are intense indeed,
But Death intenser—Death is Life's high meed.

ON DEATH

CAN death be sleep, when life is but a dream,
And scenes of bliss pass as a phantom by?
The transient pleasures as a vision seem,
And yet we think the greatest pain's to die.

How strange it is that man on earth should roam,
And lead a life of woe, but not forsake
His rugged path; nor dare he view alone
His future doom which is but to awake.

WHAT is more gentle than a wind in summer?
What is more soothing than the pretty hummer
That stays one moment in an open flower
And buzzes cheerily from bower to bower?
What is more tranquil than a musk-rose blowing
In a green island, far from all men's knowing?
More healthful than the leafiness of dales?
More secret than a nest of nightingales?
More serene than Cordelia's countenance?
More full of visions than a high romance?
What, but thee, Sleep? Soft closer of our eyes!
Low murmurer of tender lullabies!
Light hoverer around our happy pillows!
Wreather of poppy buds and weeping willows!
Silent entangler of a beauty's tresses!
Most happy listener! when the morning blesses
Thee for enlivening all the cheerful eyes
That glance so brightly at the new sun-rise.

From *Sleep and Poetry*.

NYMPH of the downward smile and sidelong glance,
In what diviner moments of the day
Art thou most lovely?—When gone far astray
Into the labyrinths of sweet utterance,
Or when serenely wand'ring in a trance
Of sober thought?—or when starting away,
With careless robe to meet the morning ray,
Thou spar'st the flowers in thy mazy dance?
Haply 'tis when thy ruby lips part sweetly,
And so remain, because thou listenest:
But thou to please wert nurtured so completely
That I can never tell what mood is best.
I shall as soon pronounce which Grace more neatly
Trips it before Apollo than the rest.

SONNET

As from the darkening gloom a silver dove
Upsoars, and darts into the eastern light,
On pinions that nought moves but pure delight,
So fled thy soul into the realms above,
Regions of peace and everlasting love;
Where happy spirits, crown'd with circlets bright
Of starry beam, and gloriously bedight,
Taste the high joy none but the blest can prove.
There thou or joinest the immortal quire
In melodies that even heaven fair
Fill with superior bliss, or, at desire,
Of the omnipotent Father, cleav'st the air
On holy message sent—What pleasure's higher?
Wherefore does any grief our joy impair?

TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.

. . . . . .

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn,
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

IN the mid-days of autumn, on their eves
The breath of Winter comes from far away,
And the sick west continually bereaves
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay
Of death among the bushes and the leaves,
To make all bare before he dares to stray
From his north cavern.

From *The Pot of Basil.*

BYRON

TO TIME

TIME ! on whose arbitrary wing
The varying hours must flag or fly,
Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,
But drag or drive us on to die—
Hail thou ! who on my birth bestow'd
Those boons to all who know thee known ;
Yet better I sustain thy load,
For now I bear the weight alone.
I would not one fond heart should share
The bitter moments thou hast given ;
And pardon thee, since thou couldst spare
All that I loved, to peace or heaven.
To them be joy or rest, on me
Thy future ills shall press in vain ;
I nothing owe but years to thee,
A debt already paid in pain.
Yet even that pain was some relief ;
It felt, but still forgot thy power :
The active agony of grief
Retards, but never counts the hour.

SOME streaks announced the coming sun—
How slow, alas! he came!
Methought that mist of dawning gray
Would never dapple into day;
How heavily it roll'd away—
Before the eastern flame
Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
And call'd the radiance from their cars,
And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
With lonely lustre, all his own.

Up rose the sun; the mists were curl'd
Back from the solitary world
Which lay around—behind—before:
. . . . .
The very air was mute;
And not an insect's shrill small horn,
Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
From herb nor thicket.

From *Mazeppa*.

WHEN the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart—as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes
While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,
A holy concord—and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?

From *A Monody on the Death of Sheridan.*

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

LOVE

YES! Love, indeed, is light from Heaven,
A spark of that immortal fire—
With angels shared—by Allah given
To lift from Earth our low desire.
Devotion wafts the mind above,
But Heaven itself descends in Love;
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought;
A ray of Him who formed the whole,
A glory circling round the soul!

'Tis night, when Meditation bids us feel
We once have lov'd, though love is at an end:
The heart, lone mourner of its baffled zeal,
Though friendless now, will dream it had a friend.
Who with the weight of years would wish to bend,
When Youth itself survives young Love and Joy?
Alas! when mingling souls forget to blend,
Death hath but little left him to destroy!
Ah! happy years! once more, who would not be a boy?

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

WHAT is the worst of woes that wait on age?
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each lov'd one blotted from life's page,
And be alone on earth, as I am now.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

OH ! ever loving, lovely, and belov'd !
How selfish Sorrow ponders on the past,
And clings to thoughts now better far remov'd !
But time shall tear thy shadow from me last.
All thou could'st have of mine, stern Death ! thou hast ;
The parent, friend, and now the more than friend :
Ne'er yet for one, thine arrows flew so fast,
And grief with grief continuing still to blend,
Hath snatch'd the little joy, that life had yet to lend.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

FAREWELL

FAREWELL ! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal avail'd on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.
'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh :
Oh ! more than tears of blood can tell,
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word—Farewell !—Farewell !

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry ;
But in my breast, and in my brain,
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel ;
I only know we loved in vain—
I only feel—Farewell !—Farewell !

TO THYRZA

. . . . .

If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again;
But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss
To wean me from mine anguish here.
Teach me—too early taught by thee!—
To bear, forgiving and forgiv'n:
On earth thy love was such to me;
It fain would form my hope in heav'n!

WRITTEN BENEATH A PICTURE

'Tis said with Sorrow Time can cope,
But this I feel can ne'er be true:
For by the death-blow of my Hope
My Memory immortal grew.

AWAY! we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

From *The Hebrew Melodies*

AND thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shattered guise, and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

By those, that deepest feel, are ill exprest
The indistinctness of the suffering breast;
Where thousand thoughts begin to end in one,
Which seeks from all the refuge found in none;
No words suffice the secret soul to show,
And Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.

From *The Corsair.*

STANZAS

THE better days of life were ours;
  The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers
  Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
  Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away:
I might have watch'd through long decay.

. . . . . .

I know not if I could have borne
  To see thy beauties fade;
The night that follow'd such a morn
  Had worn a deeper shade:
Thy day without a cloud hath past,
And thou wert lovely to the last;
  Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

EXISTENCE may be borne, and the deep root
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms: mute
The camel labours with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence,—not bestow'd
In vain should such example be; if they
Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear,—it is but for a day.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

TO THE OCEAN

THOU glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convuls'd—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

ABOVE me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around their summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

STANZAS

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lulled winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her light chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep.
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

HERE didst thou dwell, here schemes of pleasure plan,
Beneath yon mountain's ever-beauteous brow:
But now, as if a thing unblest by Man,
Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou!
Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
To halls deserted, portals gaping wide:
Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom, how
Vain are the pleasaunces on earth supplied;
Swept into wrecks anon by Time's ungentle tide.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

Oh, thou Parnassus! whom I now survey,
Not in the phrenzy of a dreamer's eye,
Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,
But soaring snow-clad through thy native sky
In the wild pomp of mountain majesty!
What marvel if I thus essay to sing?
The humblest of thy pilgrims passing by
Would gladly woo thine Echoes with his string,
Though from thy heights no more one Muse will wave
her wing.

Oft have I dream'd of Thee! whose glorious name
Who knows not, knows not man's divinest lore:
And now I view thee, 'tis, alas! with shame
That I in feeblest accents must adore.
When I recount thy worshippers of yore
I tremble, and can only bend the knee;
Nor raise my voice, nor vainly dare to soar,
But gaze beneath thy cloudy canopy
In silent joy to think at last I look on Thee!

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

. . . SLIGHT withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever: it may be a sound—
A tone of music,—summer's eve—or spring,
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound;

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,
The cold—the changed—perchance the dead—anew,
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many!—yet how few!

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

Our life is twofold; Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and Existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears, and tortures and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity;
They pass like spirits of the past,—they speak
Like sibyls of the future; they have power—
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that 's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows— . . .
. . . . . For in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

From *The Dream*

Oh, known the earliest, and esteem'd the most!
Dear to a heart where nought was left so dear!
Though to my hopeless days for ever lost,
In dreams deny me not to see thee here!
And Morn in secret shall renew the tear
Of Consciousness, awaking to her woes,
And Fancy hover o'er thy bloodless bier,
Till my frail frame return to whence it rose,
And mourn'd and mourner lie united in repose.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

THE beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

ROLL on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd and unknown.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unroll'd.

But midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel and to possess,
And roam along, the world's tir'd denizen,
With none to bless us, none whom we can bless;
Minions of splendour, shrinking from distress!
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less
Of all that flatter'd, follow'd, sought, and sued;
This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

I FELT the heavy hours toil round,
With just enough of life to see
My last of suns go down on me,
In hopeless certainty of mind,
That makes us feel at last resign'd
To that which our foreboding fears
Presents the worst and last of years
Inevitable—even a boon,
Not more unkind for coming soon;
Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
As if it only were a snare
    That prudence might escape:
At times both wish'd for and implored
At times sought with self-pointed sword,
Yet still a dark and hideous close
To even intolerable woes,
    And welcome in no shape.

From *Mazeppa.*

STANZAS

THEY say that hope is happiness,
But genuine love must prize the past
And memory wakes the thoughts that bless;
They rose the first—they set the last.

And all that memory loves the most
Was once our only hope to be,
And all that hope adored and lost
Hath melted into memory.

Alas! it is delusion all:
The future cheats us from afar,
Nor can we be what we recall,
Nor dare we think on what we are.

SLOW sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Along Morea's hills the setting sun ;
Not, as in Northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light !
O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he throws,
Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.
On old Ægina's rock, and Idra's isle,
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile ;
O'er his own regions lingering loves to shine,
Though there his altars are no more divine.
Descending fast the mountain shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulf, unconquer'd Salamis !

From *The Corsair*.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that 's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

CAMPION

WHETHER men do laugh or weep,
Whether they do wake or sleep,
Whether they die young or old,
Whether they feel heat or cold;
There is, underneath the sun,
Nothing in true earnest done.

All our pride is but a jest;
None are worst, and none are best;
Grief and joy, and hope and fear,
Play their pageants everywhere:
Vain opinion all doth sway,
And the world is but a play.

. . . . .

From *A Book of Airs.*

WHEN to her lute Corinna sings,
Her voice revives the leaden strings,
And doth in highest notes appear,
As any challenged Echo clear;
But when she doth of mourning speak,
E'en with her sighs the strings do break.

And as her lute doth live or die,
Led by her passion, so must I!
For when of pleasure, she doth sing,
My thoughts enjoy a sudden spring;
But if she doth of sorrow speak,
E'en from my heart the springs do break.

From *A Book of Airs.*

TURN back, you wanton flyer,
And answer my desire,
With mutual greeting:
Yet bend a little nearer,
True beauty still shines clearer,
In closer meeting.
Hearts, with hearts delighted,
Should strive to be united;
Either other's arms with arms enchaining:
Hearts with a thought,
Rosy lips with a kiss still entertaining.
What harvest half so sweet is
As still to reap the kisses
Grown ripe in sowing?
And straight to be receiver
Of that, which thou art giver,
Rich in bestowing?
There 's no strict observing
Of times' or seasons' swerving;
There is ever one fresh spring abiding.
Then what we sow with our lips,
Let us reap, love's gains dividing!

From *A Book of Airs.*

KIND are her answers,
But her performance keeps no day;
Breaks time, as dancers
From their own music when they stray.
All her free favours and smooth words,
Wing my hopes in vain.
O did ever voice so sweet but only feign?
Can true love yield such delay,
Converting joy to pain?
Lost is our freedom,
When we submit to women so:
Why do we need them
When, in their best they work our woe?
There is no wisdom
Can alter ends, by Fate prefixt.
O why is the good of man with evil mixt?
Never were days yet called two,
But one night went betwixt.

From *Third Book of Airs.*

WERE my heart as some men's are, thy errors would not move me;
But thy faults I curious find, and speak because I love thee:
Patience is a thing divine, and far, I grant, above me.

Foes sometimes befriend us more, our blacker deeds objecting,
Than th' obsequious bosom guest, with false respect affecting.
Friendship is the Glass of Truth, our hidden stains detecting.

While I use of eyes enjoy and inward light of reason,
Thy observer will I be and censor, but in season:
Hidden mischief to conceal in State and Love is treason.

From *Third Book of Airs.*

If love loves truth, then women do not love;
  Their passions all are but dissembled shows
Now kind and free of favour if they prove,
  Their kindness straight a tempest overthrows.
Then as a seaman the poor lover fares;
The storm drowns him ere he can drown his cares.

But why accuse I women that deceive?
  Blame then the foxes for their subtle wile:
They first from Nature did their craft receive:
  It is a woman's nature to beguile.
Yet some, I grant, in loving steadfast grow;
But such by use are made, not Nature, so.

O why had Nature power at once to frame
  Deceit and Beauty, traitors both to Love?
O would Deceit had died when Beauty came
  With her divineness every heart to move!
Yet do we rather wish, whate'er befall,
To have fair women false than none at all.

From *Third Book of Airs.*

THOU art not fair, for all thy red and white,
For all those rosy ornaments in thee;
Thou art not sweet, though made of mere delight,
Nor fair, nor sweet, unless thou pity me.
I will not soothe thy fancies: Thou shalt prove
That beauty is no beauty without love.

Yet love not me, nor seek thou to allure
My thoughts with beauty, were it more divine:
Thy smiles and kisses I cannot endure,
I 'll not be wrapt up in those arms of thine:
Now show it, if thou be a woman right,—
Embrace, and kiss, and love me, in despite!

From *A Book of Airs.*

SWEET, come again!
  Your happy sight, so much desired,
Since you from hence are now retired,
I seek in vain:
Still must I mourn
  And pine in longing pain,
  Till you, my life's delight, again
Vouchsafe your wished return.

. . . . .

You had the power
  My wand'ring thoughts first to restrain,
You first did hear my love speak plain!
A child before,
Now it is grown
  Confirmed, do you it keep,
  And let it safe in your bosom sleep,
There ever made your own!

. . . . . .

From *A Book of Airs.*

. . . . .

KINDNESS grown is, lately, cold;
Conscience hath forgot her part;
Blessed times were known of old,
Long ere Law became an Art:
Shame deterred, not Statutes then,
Honest love was law to men.

Deeds from love, and, words that flow,
Foster like kind April showers;
In the warm sun all things grow,
Wholesome fruits and pleasant flowers:
All so thrives his gentle rays,
Whereon human love displays.

From *Divine and Moral Songs.*

WHAT is a day, what is a year
  Of vain delight and pleasure?
Like to a dream it endless dies,
  And from us like a vapour flies:
And this is all the fruit that we find,
  Which glory in worldly treasure.

He that will hope for true delight,
  With virtue must be graced;
Sweet folly yields a bitter taste,
  Which ever will appear at last:
But if we still in virtue delight,
  Our souls are in heaven placed.

From *A Book of Airs.*

OUT of my soul's depth to Thee my cries have sounded :
Let Thine ears my plaints receive, on just fear grounded.
Lord, shouldst Thou weigh our faults, who 's not confounded ?

But with grace Thou censurest Thine when they have erred,
Therefore shall Thy blessed Name be loved and feared.
Even to Thy throne my thoughts and eyes are reared.

They alone my hopes attend, on Thee relying ;
In Thy sacred word I 'll trust, to Thee fast flying,
Long ere the watch shall break, the morn descrying.

In the mercies of our God who live secured,
May of full redemption rest in Him assured ;
Their sin-sick souls by Him shall be recured.

From *Divine and Moral Songs.*

AUTHOR of light, revive my dying sprite!
Redeem it from the snares of all-confounding night!
Lord, light me to Thy blessed way!
For blind with worldly vain desires, I wander as a stray.
Sun and moon, stars and under-lights I see;
But all their glorious beams are mists and darkness, being
compared to Thee.

Fountain of health, my soul's deep wounds recure!
Sweet showers of pity rain, wash my uncleanness pure!
One drop of Thy desired grace
The faint and fading heart can raise, and in joy's bosom
place.
Sin and death, hell and tempting fiends may rage,
But God His own will guard, and their sharp pains and
grief in time assuage.

From *Divine and Moral Songs.*

SEEK the Lord, and in His ways persèver!
O faint not, but as eagles fly,
For His steep hill is high!
Then striving gain the top and triumph ever!

When with glory there thy brows are crowned,
New joys so shall abound in thee,
Such sights thy soul shall see,
That worldly thoughts shall by their beams be drowned.

Farewell, World, thou mass of mere confusion!
False light, with many shadows dimmed!
Old witch, with new foils trimmed!
Thou deadly sleep of soul, and charmed illusion!

I the King will seek, of Kings adored;
Spring of light; tree of grace and bliss,
Whose fruit so sovereign is
That all who taste it are from death restored.

From *Divine and Moral Songs.*

NEVER weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore,
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more,
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled
breast,
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest!

Ever blooming are the joys of heaven's high Paradise,
Cold age deafs not there our ears nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the sun outshines; whose beams the Blessed
only see.
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to Thee!

From *Divine and Moral Songs.*

AWAKE, awake, thou heavy sprite,
That sleep'st the deadly sleep of sin!
Rise now and walk the ways of light!
'Tis not too late yet to begin.
Seek heaven early, seek it late:
True Faith still finds an open gate.

Get up, get up, thou leaden man!
Thy track to endless joy or pain
Yields but the model of a span;
Yet burns out thy life's lamp in vain!
One minute bounds thy bane or bliss:
Then watch and labour, while time is!

From *Divine and Moral Songs.*

To music bent, is my retired mind,
And fain would I some song of pleasure sing;
But in vain joys no comfort now I find,
From heavenly thoughts, all true delight doth spring:
Thy power, O God, Thy mercies, to record,
Will sweeten every note and every word.

All earthly pomp or beauty to express,
Is but to carve in snow, on waves to write;
Celestial things, though men conceive them less,
Yet fullest are they in themselves of light:
Such beams they yield as know no means to die,
Such heat they cast as lifts the spirit high.

From *Divine and Moral Songs.*

COME, cheerful day, part of my life to me:
For while thou view'st me with thy fading light,
Part of my life doth still depart with thee,
And I still onward haste to my last night.
Time's fatal wings do ever forward fly:
So every day we live a day we die.

But, O ye nights, ordained for barren rest,
How are my days deprived of life in you,
When heavy sleep my soul hath dispossest,
By feigned death life sweetly to renew!
Part of my life in that, you life deny:
So every day we live a day we die.

From *Divine and Moral Songs.*

THE peaceful western wind
The winter storms have tamed,
And Nature in each kind
The kind heat hath inflamed:
The forward buds so sweetly breathe
Out of their earthy bowers,
That heaven, which views their pomp beneath,
Would fain be decked with flowers.

See how the morning smiles
On her bright eastern hill,
And with soft steps beguiles
Them that lie slumbering still!
The music-loving birds are come
From cliffs and rocks unknown,
To see the trees and briars bloom
That late were overthrown.

. . . . .

From *Light Conceits of Lovers.*

Be thou then my Beauty named,
  Since thy will is to be mine!
For by that I am enflamed,
  Which on all alike doth shine.
Others may the light admire,
I only truly feel the fire.

But if lofty titles move thee,
  Challenge then a Sovereign's place!
Say I honour when I love thee;
  Let me call thy kindness Grace.
State and Love things diverse be,
Yet will we teach them to agree!

Or if this be not sufficing;
  Be thou styled my Goddess then:
I will love thee, sacrificing;
  In thine honour, hymns I 'll pen.
To be thine, what canst thou more?
I 'll love thee, serve thee, and adore.

From *Third Book of Airs.*

O SWEET delight, O more than human bliss,
With her to live that ever loving is;
To hear her speak, whose words are so well placed,
That she by them, as they in her are graced:
Those looks to view, that feast the viewer's eye,
How blest is he that may so live and die!

Such love as this the golden times did know,
When all did reap, yet none took care to sow;
Such love as this an endless summer makes,
And all distaste from frail affection takes.
So loved, so blessed, in my beloved am I;
Which till their eyes ache, let iron men envy!

From *Third Book of Airs*.

DEAR, if I with guile would gild a true intent,
Heaping flatt'ries that in heart were never meant:
Easily could I then obtain
What now in vain I force;
Falsehood much doth gain,
Truth yet holds the better course.

Love forbid that through dissembling I should thrive,
Or in praising you myself of truth deprive!
Let not your high thoughts debase
A simple truth in me:
Great is Beauty's grace,
Truth is yet as fair as she!

Praise is but the wind of pride, if it exceeds;
Wealth, prized in itself, no outward value needs.
Fair you are, and passing fair:
You know it, and 'tis true
Yet let none despair
But to find as fair as you.

From *Fourth Book of Airs.*

SHALL I then hope when faith is fled?
Can I seek love when hope is gone?
Or can I live when hope is dead?
Poorly he lives, that can love none.
Her vows are broke and I am free;
She lost her faith in losing me.

When I compare mine own events,
When I weigh others' like annoy:
All do but heap up discontents
That on a beauty build their joy.
Thus I of all complain, since she
All faith hath lost in losing me.

So my dear freedom have I gained,
Through her unkindness and disgrace:
Yet could I ever live enchained,
As she my service did embrace.
But she is changed, and I am free:
Faith failing her, love died in me.

From *Third Book of Airs.*

KIND in unkindness, when will you relent
And cease with faint love true love to torment?
Still entertained, excluded still I stand;
Her glove still hold, but cannot touch the hand.

In her fair hand my hopes and comforts rest:
O might my fortunes with that hand be blest!
No envious breaths then my deserts could shake,
For they are good whom such true love doth make.

O let not beauty so forget her birth,
That it should fruitless home return to earth!
Love is the fruit of beauty, then love one!
Not your sweet self, for such self-love is none.

Love one that only lives in loving you;
Whose wronged deserts would you with pity view,
This strange distaste which your affections sways
Would relish love, and you find better days.

. . . . . .

From *A Book of Airs.*

LOVE me or not, love her I must or die;
Leave me or not, follow her, needs must I.
O that her grace would my wished comforts give!
How rich in her, how happy should I live!

All my desire, all my delight should be,
Her to enjoy, her to unite to me:
Envy should cease, her would I love alone:
Who loves by looks, is seldom true to one.

Could I enchant, and that it lawful were,
Her would I charm softly that none should hear.
But love enforced rarely yields firm content;
So would I love that neither should repent.

From *Fourth Book of Airs.*

Now let her change and spare not!
Since she proves strange I care not:
Feigned love charmed so my delight
That still I doted on her sight.
But she is gone, new joys embracing
And my desires disgracing.

When did I err in blindness,
Or vex her with unkindness?
If my cares served her alone,
Why is she thus untimely gone?
True love abides to th' hour of dying:
False love is ever flying.

False! then, farewell for ever!
Once false proves faithful never:
He that boasts now of thy love,
Shall soon my present fortunes prove.
Were he as fair as bright Adonis,
Faith is not had, where none is.

From *Third Book of Airs*.

WHEN thou must home to shades of underground,
And there arrived, a new admired guest,
The beauteous spirits do engirt thee round,
White Iope, blithe Helen, and the rest,
To hear the stories of thy finished love
From that smooth tongue whose music hell can move;

Then wilt thou speak of banqueting delights,
Of masques and revels which sweet youth did make,
Of tourneys and great challenges of knights,
And all these triumphs for thy beauty's sake:
When thou hast told these honours done to thee,
Then tell, O tell, how thou didst murder me.

From *A Book of Airs.*

FIRE that must flame is with apt fuel fed,
Flowers that will thrive in sunny soil are bred.
How can a heart feel heat that no hope finds?
Or can he love on whom no comfort shines?

Fair! I confess there's pleasure in your sight!
Sweet! you have power, I grant, of all delight!
But what is all to me, if I have none?
Churl that you are, t'enjoy such wealth alone!

Prayers move the heavens, but find no grace with you;
Yet in your looks a heavenly form I view,
Then will I pray again, hoping to find,
As well as in your looks heaven in your mind!

From *Third Book of Airs.*

BLAME not my cheeks, though pale with love they be;
The kindly heat unto my heart is flown,
To cherish it that is dismayed by thee,
Who art so cruel and unsteadfast grown:
For Nature, called for by distressed hearts,
Neglects and quite forsakes the outward parts.

But they whose cheeks with careless blood are stained,
Nurse not one spark of love within their hearts;
And, when they woo, they speak with passion feigned,
For their fat love lies in their outward parts:
But in their breasts, where love his court should hold,
Poor Cupid sits and blows his nails for cold.

From *A Book of Airs.*

CAN you, the author of our joy,
So soon depart?
Will you revive, and straight destroy?
New mirth to tears convert?
O that ever cause of gladness
Should so swiftly turn to sadness!

Now as we droop, so will these flowers,
Barred of your sight:
Nothing avail them heav'nly showers
Without your heav'nly light.
When the glorious sun forsakes us,
Winter quickly overtakes us.

Yet shall our prayers your ways attend,
When you are gone;
And we the tedious time will spend,
Rememb'ring you alone.
Welcome here shall you hear ever,
But the word of parting never.

From *A Relation of the Entertainment given by the Lord Knowles.*

Now winter nights enlarge
The number of their hours;
And clouds their storms discharge
Upon the airy towers.
Let now the chimneys blaze
And cups o'erflow with wine,
Let well-tuned words amaze
With harmony divine!
Now yellow waxen lights
Shall wait on honey love
While youthful revels, masques, and Courtly sights,
Sleep's leaden spells remove.

. . . . . .

The summer hath his joys,
And winter his delights;
Though love and all his pleasures are but toys,
They shorten tedious nights.

From *Third Book of Airs.*

SIR WALTER SCOTT

LOVEST thou through Autumn's fading realms to stray,
To see the heath flower wither'd on the hill,
To listen to the wood's expiring lay,
To note the red leaf shivering on the spray,
To mark the last bright tints the mountain stain,
On the waste fields to trace the gleaner's way,
And moralise on mortal joy and pain?—
O! if such scenes thou lov'st, scorn not the minstrel strain.

From *The Lord of the Isles.*

O CALEDONIA ! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child !
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires ! what mortal hand,
Can e'er untie the filial band,
That knits me to thy rugged strand !

. . . . .

By Yarrow's streams still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way !
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
Although it chill my wither'd cheek ;
Still lay my head by Teviot Stone,
Though there, forgotten and alone,
The Bard may draw his parting groan.

From *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his ceaseless course.

From *The Lady of the Lake.*

TRUE love 's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the heaven.
It is not fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly ;
It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it doth not die ;
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind.

From *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

LOVE wakes and weeps
While Beauty sleeps!
O for Music's softest numbers,
To prompt a theme
For Beauty's dream,
Soft as the pillow of her slumbers!

Through groves of palm
Sigh gales of balm,
Fire-flies on the air are wheeling;
While through the gloom
Comes soft perfume,
The distant beds of flowers revealing.

O wake and live!
No dream can give
A shadow'd bliss, the real excelling;
No longer sleep,
From lattice peep,
And list the tale that Love is telling.

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush
Singing so rarely.

'Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?'
—'When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.'

'Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?'
—'The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

'The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady;
The owl from the steeple sing,
Welcome, proud lady.'

WHERE shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted for ever?
Where, through groves deep and high,
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.

There, through the summer day,
Cool streams are laving;
There, where the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving;
There, thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted for ever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never!

From *Marmion*

WHERE shall the traitor rest,
He, the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin, and leave her?
In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted;
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted.
Shame and dishonour sit
By his grave ever;
Blessing shall hallow it,
Never, O never!

From *Marmion.*

THE hunting tribes of air and earth
Respect the brethren of their birth;
Nature, who loves the claim of kind,
Less cruel chase to each assign'd.
The falcon, poised on soaring wing,
Watches the wild-duck by the spring;
The slow-hound wakes the fox's lair;
The grey-hound presses on the hare;
The eagle pounces on the lamb;
The wolf devours the fleecy dam;
Even tiger fell, and sullen bear,
Their likeness and their lineage spare,
Man, only, mars kind Nature's plan,
And turns the fierce pursuit on man.

From *Rokeby*.

WHEN, musing on companions gone,
We doubly feel ourselves alone,
Something, my friend, we yet may gain,
There is a pleasure in this pain:
It soothes the love of lonely rest,
Deep in each gentle heart impress'd.
'Tis silent amid worldly toils,
And stifled soon by mental broils;
But, in a bosom thus prepared,
Its still small voice is often heard,
Whispering a mingled sentiment,
'Twixt resignation and content.

From *Marmion.*

It was an English lady bright,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
And she would marry a Scottish knight,
For Love will still be lord of all.

Blithely they saw the rising sun,
When he shone fair on Carlisle wall;
But they were sad ere day was done,
Though Love was still the lord of all.

Her sire gave brooch and jewel fine,
When the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall:
Her brother gave but a flask of wine,
For ire that Love was lord of all.

For she had lands both meadow and lea,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall;
And he swore her death, ere he would see
A Scottish knight the lord of all!

From *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

THAT wine she had not tasted well,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
When dead, in her true love's arms, she fell,
For Love was still the lord of all!

He pierced her brother to the heart,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall:—
So perish all would true love part,
That Love may still be lord of all!

And then he took the cross divine,
(Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
And died for her sake in Palestine,
So Love was still the lord of all.

Now all ye lovers that faithful prove,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
Pray for their souls who died for love,
For Love shall still be lord of all!

From *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

FAIR as the earliest beam of eastern light,
When first, by the bewilder'd pilgrim spied,
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
And lights the fearful path on mountain-side;—
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,
Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow of War.

From *The Lady of the Lake.*

LOOK not thou on beauty's charming,—
Sit thou still when kings are arming,—
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,—
Speak not when the people listens,—
Stop thine ear against the singer,—
From the red gold keep thy finger,—
Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,
Easy live and quiet die.

Woe to the youth, whom Fancy gains,
Winning from Reason's hands the reins,
Pity and woe! for such a mind
Is soft, contemplative, and kind;
And woe to those who train such youth,
And spare to press the rights of truth,
The mind to strengthen and anneal,
While on the stithy glows the steel!
O teach him, while your lessons last,
To judge the present by the past;
Remind him of each wish pursued,
How rich it glow'd with promised good;
Remind him of each wish enjoy'd,
How soon his hopes possession cloy'd!

From *Rokeby.*

HAST thou not mark'd, when o'er thy startled head
Sudden and deep the thunder-peal has roll'd,
How, when its echoes fell, a silence dead
Sunk on the wood, the meadow, and the wold?
The rye-grass shakes not on the sod-built fold,
The rustling aspen's leaves are mute and still,
The wall-flower waves not on the ruin'd hold,
Till, murmuring distant first, then near and shrill,
The savage whirlwind wakes, and sweeps the groaning hill!

From *The Lord of the Isles.*

THE summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled, but dimpled not for joy;
The mountain-shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to Fancy's eye.

. . . . .

Invisible in flecked sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The blackbird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer coo'd the cushat dove
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

From *The Lady of the Lake.*

THE rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest wash'd with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalm'd in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!

From *The Lady of the Lake.*

'A WEARY lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine!
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green,—
No more of me you knew,
My love!
No more of me you knew.

'This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow,
Ere we two meet again.'
He turn'd his charger as he spake,
Upon the river shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
Said, 'Adieu for evermore,
My love!
And adieu for evermore.'

From *Rokeby*.

NOT faster yonder rowers' might
Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days.

From *The Lady of the Lake.*

THE sultry summer day is done,
The western hills have hid the sun,
But mountain peak and village spire
Retain reflection of his fire.

. . . . .

Rich with the spoils of parting day,
In crimson and in gold array'd,
Streaks yet a while the closing shade,
Then slow resigns to darkening heaven
The tints which brighter hours had given.
Thus aged men, full loth and slow,
The vanities of life forego,
And count their youthful follies o'er
Till memory lends her light no more.

From *Rokeby*.

IN peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

From *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

CALL it not vain:—they do not err,
Who say, that when the Poet dies,
Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
And celebrates his obsequies:
Who say, tall cliff, and cavern lone,
For the departed Bard make moan:
That mountains weep in crystal rill;
That flowers in tears of balm distil;
Through his loved groves that breezes sigh,
And oaks, in deeper groan, reply;
And rivers teach their rushing wave
To murmur dirges round his grave.

From *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

If thou wouldst view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins grey.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruin'd central tower;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebon and ivory;
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view St. David's ruin'd pile;
And home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!

From *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

THE tear, down childhood's cheek that flows,
Is like the dew-drop on the rose;
When next the summer breeze comes by,
And waves the bush, the flower is dry.

. . . . .

When lovers meet in adverse hour,
'Tis like a sun-glimpse through a shower,
A watery ray, an instant seen
The darkly closing clouds between.

From *Rokeby*.

AH! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea.
The lark, his lay who trill'd all day,
Sits hush'd his partner nigh;
Breeze, bird, and flower confess the hour,
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the shade,
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To beauty shy, by lattice high,
Sings high-born Cavalier.
The star of Love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky;
And high and low the influence know—
But where is County Guy?

WOMAN'S faith, and woman's trust—
Write the characters in dust;
Stamp them on the running stream,
Print them on the moon's pale beam,
And each evanescent letter
Shall be clearer, firmer, better,
And more permanent, I ween,
Than the thing those letters mean.

From *The Truth of Woman.*

THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air
Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.
What various scenes, and, O! what scenes of woe,
Are witness'd by that red and struggling beam!

From *The Lady of the Lake.*

BOON nature scatter'd, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalm'd the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Group'd their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.

From *The Lady of the Lake.*

LET our halls and towers decay,
Be our name and line forgot,
Lands and manors pass away,—
We but share our Monarch's lot.
If no more our annals show
Battles won and banners taken,
Still in death, defeat, and woe,
Ours be loyalty unshaken !

Constant still in danger's hour,
Princes own'd our fathers' aid ;
Lands and honours, wealth and power,
Well their loyalty repaid.
Perish wealth, and power, and pride !
Mortal boons by mortals given ;
But let Constancy abide,
Constancy 's the gift of Heaven.

From *Rokeby*.

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
The deer, half seen, are to their covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel harp!
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp
May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devour'd alone.
That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.

From *The Lady of the Lake.*

WORDSWORTH

TIME flies; it is his melancholy task
To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,
And re-produce the trouble he destroys.
But, while his blindness thus is occupied,
Discerning Mortal! do thou serve the will
Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace
Which the world wants, shall be for thee confirmed.

From *The Excursion.*

AND what are things eternal?—powers depart,

. . . . . .

Possessions vanish, and opinions change,
And passions hold a fluctuating seat:
But, by the storms of circumstance unshaken,
And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,
Duty exists;—immutably survive,
For our support, the measures and the forms,
Which an abstract intelligence supplies;
Whose kingdom is, where time and space are not.

From *The Excursion.*

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

FOR I have learn'd
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity.
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

From *Tintern Abbey.*

As if awakened, summoned, roused, constrained,
I looked for universal things; perused
The common countenance of earth and sky:
Earth, nowhere unembellished by some trace
Of that first Paradise whence man was driven;
And sky, whose beauty and bounty are expressed
By the proud name she bears—the name of Heaven.

From *The Prelude.*

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

From *The Ode on the Intimations of Immortality.*

ONE adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists—one only; an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power;
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good.

From *The Excursion.*

MAGNIFICENT

The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
Glorious as e'er I had beheld—in front
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,
The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,
Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light;
And in the meadows and the lower ground
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn—
Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,
And labourers going forth to till the fields.

From *The Prelude.*

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

From *Lines written in Early Spring.*

THE Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the Earth.

From *The Ode on the Intimations of Immortality.*

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

SONNET

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the Wind
I turned to share the transport—oh! with whom
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find?
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—
But how could I forget thee? Through what power,
Even for the least division of an hour,
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss?—That thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more;
That neither present time, nor years unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

I CANNOT doubt that they whom you deplore
Are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall wake
From sleep, and dwell with God in endless love.
Hope, below this, consists not with belief
In mercy, carried infinite degrees
Beyond the tenderness of human hearts:
Hope, below this, consists not with belief
In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest power,
That finds no limits but her own pure will.

From *The Excursion.*

LONG have I loved what I behold,
The night that calms, the day that cheers;
The common growth of mother-earth
Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,
Her humblest mirth and tears.

The dragon's wing, the magic ring,
I shall not covet for my dower,
If I along that lowly way
With sympathetic heart may stray,
And with a soul of power.

These given, what more need I desire
To stir, to soothe, or elevate?
What nobler marvels than the mind
May in life's daily prospect find,
May find or there create?

A potent wand doth Sorrow wield;
What spell so strong as guilty Fear!
Repentance is a tender Sprite;
If aught on earth hath heavenly might,
'Tis lodged within her silent tear.

From *Peter Bell.*

SONNET

(*Composed on Westminster Bridge*)

EARTH has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

AMONG the multitudes
Of that huge city, oftentimes was seen
Affectingly set forth, more than elsewhere,
Is possible, the unity of man,
One spirit over ignorance and vice
Predominant, in good and evil hearts;
One sense for moral judgments, as one eye
For the sun's light. The soul when smitten thus
By a sublime *idea*, whence soe'er
Vouchsafed for union or communion, feeds
On the pure bliss, and takes her rest with God.

From *The Prelude*.

HOPE rules a land for ever green:
All powers that serve the bright-eyed Queen
Are confident and gay;
Clouds at her bidding disappear;
Points she to aught?—the bliss draws near,
And Fancy smooths the way.

Not such the land of Wishes—there
Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer,
And thoughts with things at strife;
Yet how forlorn, should *ye* depart,
Ye superstitions of the *heart*,
How poor were human life!

From *The Wishing-Gate.*

LOUD is the Vale! The Voice is up
With which she speaks when storms are gone,
A mighty unison of streams!
Of all her Voices, One!

Loud is the Vale;—this inland Depth
In peace is roaring like the Sea;
Yon star upon the mountain-top
Is listening quietly.

. . . . .

A Power is passing from the earth
To breathless Nature's dark abyss;
But when the great and good depart
What is it more than this—

That Man, who is from God sent forth,
Doth yet again to God return?—
Such ebb and flow must ever be,
Then wherefore should we mourn?

From *Lines composed at Grasmere.*

To me, who find,
Reviewing my past way, much to condemn,
Little to praise, and nothing to regret,
(Save some remembrances of dream-like joys
That scarcely seem to have belonged to me)
If I must take my choice between the pair
That rule alternately the weary hours,
Night is than day more acceptable; sleep
Doth, in my estimate of good, appear
A better state than waking; death than sleep:
Feelingly sweet is stillness after storm,
Though under covert of the wormy ground!

From *The Excursion.*

SONNET

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky;
I thought of all by turns, and yet I lie
Sleepless! and soon the small birds' melodies
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:
So do not let me wear to-night away:
Without thee what is all the morning's wealth?
Come, blessèd barrier between day and day,
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe!
Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought,
That givest to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion, not in vain
By day or star-light thus from my first dawn
Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
The passions that build up our human soul.

From *The Prelude.*

SONNET

WHY art thou silent? Is thy love a plant
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air
Of absence withers what was once so fair?
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant
(As would my deeds have been) with hourly care,
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant
For nought but what thy happiness could spare.
Speak—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

ETHEREAL minstrel! Pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still!

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-prompted strain,
('Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet mightst thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine;
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!

From *To a Skylark.*

'Tis by comparison an easy task
Earth to despise; but, to converse with heaven—
This is not easy:—to relinquish all
We have, or hope, of happiness or joy,
And stand in freedom loosened from this world,
I deem not arduous; but must needs confess
That 'tis a thing impossible to frame
Conceptions equal to the soul's desires;
And the most difficult of tasks to *keep*
Heights which the soul is competent to gain.

From *The Excursion*

We clomb a green hill's side; and as we clomb,
The Valley, opening out her bosom, gave
Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,
O'er the flat meadows and indented coast
Of the smooth lake, in compass seen:—far off,
And yet conspicuous, stood the old Church-tower,
In majesty presiding over fields
And habitations, seemingly preserved
From the intrusion of a restless world
By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

From *The Excursion.*

AH ! what a warning for a thoughtless man,
Could field or grove, could any spot of earth,
Show to his eye an image of the pangs
Which it hath witnessed ; render back an echo
Of the sad steps by which it hath been trod !

From *The Excursion.*

SONNET

AIR sleeps,—from strife or stir the clouds are free ;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea :
But list ! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear Child ! dear happy Girl ! if thou appear
Heedless—untouched with awe or serious thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine :
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

I WELL remember that those very plumes,
Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on that wall,
By mist and silent rain-drops silvered o'er,
As once I passed, into my heart conveyed
So still an image of tranquillity,
So calm and still, and looked so beautiful
Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled my mind,
That what we feel of sorrow and despair
From ruin and from change, and all the grief
The passing shows of Being leave behind,
Appeared an idle dream, that could not live
Where meditation was.

From *The Excursion.*

Oh Life! without thy chequered scene
Of right and wrong, of weal and woe,
Success and failure, could a ground
For magnanimity be found;
For faith, 'mid ruined hopes, serene?
Or whence could virtue flow?

Pain entered through a ghastly breach—
Nor while sin lasts must effort cease;
Heaven upon earth 's an empty boast;
But, for the bowers of Eden lost,
Mercy has placed within our reach
A portion of God's peace.

MILTON

THUS with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather, thou celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes; all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

From *Paradise Lost.*

I HEAR the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.

From *Il Penseroso*.

THE star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east.

From *Comus*.

SONNET

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
  Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
  And that one talent which is death to hide,
  Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
  My true account, lest He returning chide;
  'Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?'
  I fondly ask: but Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need
  Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
  Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed
  And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
  They also serve who only stand and wait.'

BEFRIEND me, Night, best patroness of grief,
Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,
And work my flatter'd fancy to belief,
That Heaven and Earth are colour'd with my woe;
My sorrows are too dark for day to know:
The leaves should all be black whereon I write,
And letters where my tears have wash'd, a wannish white.

From *The Passion.*

JUST are the ways of God,
And justifiable to men;
Unless there be who think not God at all:
If any be, thy walk obscure;
For of such doctrine never was there school,
But the heart of the fool,
And no man therein doctor but himself.

From *Samson Agoni*

THERE in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eyelids laid.
And as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or th' unseen Genius of the wood.

From *Il Penseroso.*

SONG

SWEET Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flow'ry cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the sphere!
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heav'n's harmonies.

From *Comus*.

BLEST pair of Sirens, pledges of heav'n's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd pow'r employ
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce;
And to our high-rais'd phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure concent,
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
To Him that sits thereon
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee,
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
Their loud up-lifted angel-trumpets blow,
And the cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly.

From *At a Solemn Music*

Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks:
Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears
Bid amarantus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strow the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.

From *Lycidas.*

As bees
In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters: they among fresh dens and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate, and confer
Their state affairs: So thick the aery crowd
Swarm'd and were straiten'd.

From *Paradise Lost.*

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
My gliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate and the azure sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet,
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread.

From *Comus.*

THE hour
Of night and all things now retir'd to rest
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive, and the timely dew of sleep
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines
Our eyelids: other creatures all day long
Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest:
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of heaven on all his ways.

From *Paradise Lost.*

WEEP no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky;
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Thro' the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves,
Where, other groves, and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.

From *Lycidas*.

O DARK, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
Without all hope of day!
O first created beam, and thou great Word,
Let there be light, and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd?
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffus'd,
That she might look at will through every pore,
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,
As in the land of darkness yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death!

From *Samson Agonistes.*

THE mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n.

From *Paradise Lost*.

How charming is divine philosophy !
Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical, as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

From *Comus.*

THIS is servitude,
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thy self not free, but to thy self enthrall'd.

From *Paradise Lost.*

THIS is true liberty, when freeborn men
Having t' advise the public may speak free ;
Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise :
Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace,
What can be juster in a state than this ?

Translation from Euripides.

MAMMON led them on,
Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
From heav'n; for ev'n in heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
In vision beatific.

From *Paradise Lost.*

EXTOL not riches then, the toil of fools,
The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare, more apt
To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
. . . . A crown,
Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights
To him who wears the regal diadem.

From *Paradise Regained.*

SWEET is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful ev'ning mild; then silent night
With this her solemn bird and this fair moon,
And there the gems of heav'n, her starry train.

From *Paradise Lost.*

Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
She all night long her amorous descant sung;
Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the firmament
With living sapphires; Hesperus that led
The starry host rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

From *Paradise Lost.*

AT His birth a star
Unseen before in heav'n, proclaims Him come;
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold;
His place of birth a solemn angel tells
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;
They gladly thither haste, and by a choir
Of squadron'd angels hear His carol sung.

From *Paradise Lost*.

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded Maid, and Virgin Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

. . . . . .

See how from far upon the Eastern road
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel quire,
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

From *The Ode on Christ's Nativity.*

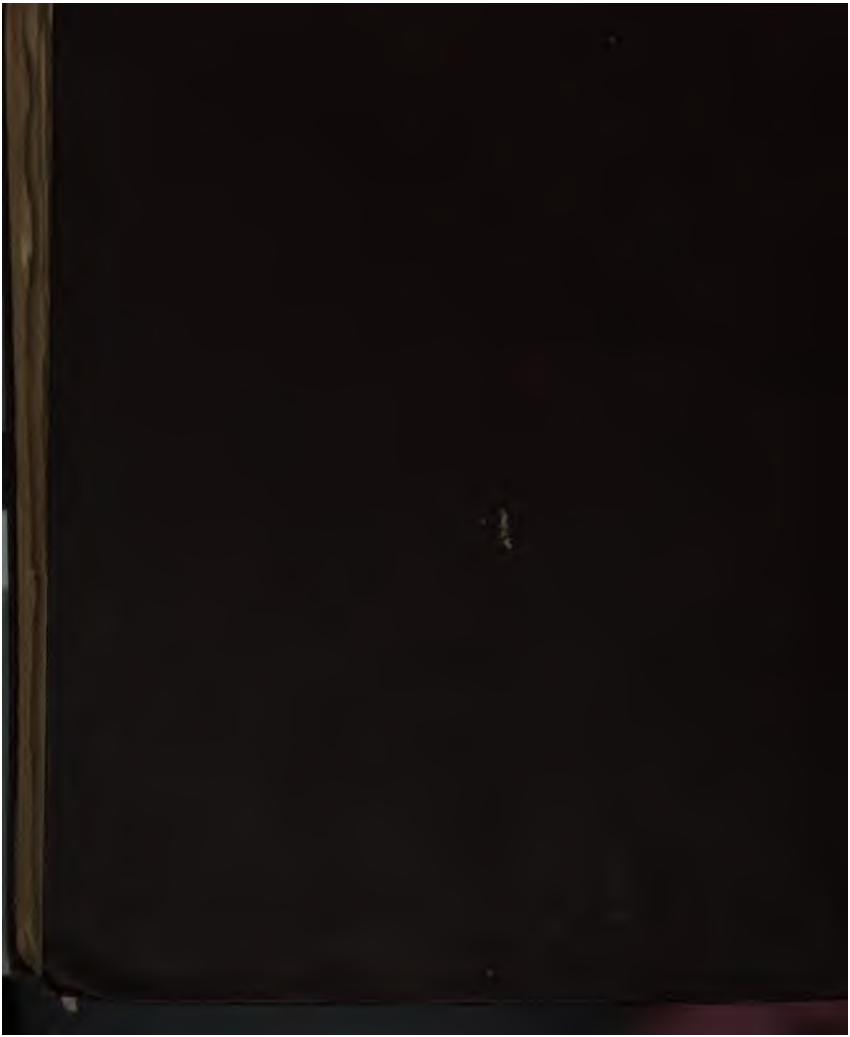
BUT peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light
  His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds with wonder whist
Smoothly the waters kist,
  Whisp'ring new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,
  Bending one way their precious influence,
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
  Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

From *Hymn on Christ's Nativity*.

FATHER Eternal, thine is to decree,
Mine both in heav'n and earth to do thy will
Supreme, that thou in me thy Son belov'd
May'st ever rest well pleas'd.

From *Paradise Lost*.

. . . On me let Death wreak all his rage,
Under his gloomy power I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd ; thou hast giv'n me to possess
Life in myself for ever, by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die ; yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell :
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil ;
Death, his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
. . . . . .
Then with the multitude of my redeem'd
Shall enter heaven long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy Face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
And reconcilement : wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.

From *Paradise Lost.*